



## Improving Arabic Reading Skills through Al-Wadlih Grammar Instruction in Islamic Boarding Schools

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### Abstract

Arabic reading skill is a central competency in Islamic boarding school education because it enables students to access classical Islamic texts and understand Arabic sources accurately. However, many students still experience difficulty applying grammatical knowledge to reading practice, even after learning basic rules of nahwu. This study examines the effectiveness of Al-Wadlih-based grammar instruction in improving Arabic reading skills among secondary-level students in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. The study employed a quantitative experimental design involving second-grade secondary students at Mambaul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School in Tegal and Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Brebes. The experimental groups received grammar instruction using selected materials from Al-Wadlih, while the control groups continued learning through the previously used grammar text. The intervention was conducted in eight meetings, each lasting 45 minutes, through opening activities, review, grammar explanation, guided exercises, and reading application. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, observation, interviews, and questionnaires, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test analysis. The findings show that Al-Wadlih-based instruction significantly improved students' Arabic reading skills in both schools. At Mambaul Hikmah, the obtained t-value was 4.534, while at Darussalam the obtained t-value was 3.125; both exceeded the critical t-table values at the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels. These results indicate that Al-Wadlih can function as an effective pedagogical bridge between grammar mastery and Arabic reading competence. The study contributes to Arabic language education by highlighting the

*importance of contextual, exercise-based, and reading-oriented grammar instruction in pesantren learning.*

**Keywords:** *Al-Wadliḥ; Arabic grammar instruction; Arabic reading skills; Islamic boarding schools; quantitative experiment.*

## Introduction

Arabic reading skills occupy a central position in Islamic boarding school education because they enable students to access classical Islamic texts, Arabic references, and broader sources of religious knowledge.<sup>1</sup> In the Indonesian pesantren tradition, Arabic learning is not merely directed toward communicative competence, but also toward textual comprehension, grammatical accuracy, and the ability to understand religious scholarship through Arabic sources.<sup>2</sup> This makes reading skill one of the most important competencies in Arabic language education, particularly for students who are expected to interact with Arabic texts in both classroom and religious learning contexts.<sup>3</sup> Reading in Arabic requires more than the ability to pronounce written symbols correctly.<sup>4</sup> Students need to recognize vocabulary, sentence structures, syntactic relations, and contextual meanings in order to understand a text accurately.<sup>5</sup> For this reason, Arabic reading instruction should not be separated from grammar instruction, because Arabic syntax provides the structural foundation that helps learners identify the function of words in a sentence.<sup>6</sup> In many Islamic boarding schools, the study of nahwu

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<sup>1</sup> Ismail Suardi Wekke, "Arabic Teaching and Learning: A Model from Indonesian Muslim Minority," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 191 (2015): 286–90, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.236>.

<sup>2</sup> Abd Rozak, "Modernisme Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Berbasis Pesantren Di Rangkasbitung Banten," *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies* 3, no. 2 (2018): 167–80, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v3i2.110>.

<sup>3</sup> Burhan Yusuf Habibi, "Integrasi Kurikulum Bahasa Arab Pesantren Tradisional Dan Modern Di Madrasah Aliyah Program Keagamaan," *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2019): 151–67, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v4i2.178>.

<sup>4</sup> Abdullah Syahid Robbani and Mohammad Sholehudin Romadhoni, "The Use of Dictionary for Arabic Language Textbook to Improve the Students' Reading Skill," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 13, no. 2 (2021): 231–53, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v13i2.8620>.

<sup>5</sup> Sima Khezrlou, Rod Ellis, and Karim Sadeghi, "Effects of Computer-Assisted Glosses on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition and Reading Comprehension in Three Learning Conditions," *System* 65 (2017): 104–16, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.01.009>.

<sup>6</sup> Ade Arip Ardiansyah and Azhar Muhammad, "Implementation of Integrative Arabic Grammar (Nahwu & Sharaf) Curriculum in Islamic Boarding School," *Izdihar: Journal of Arabic Language*

has long been regarded as an essential pathway for developing the ability to read and understand Arabic texts.<sup>7</sup> However, the relationship between grammar mastery and reading skill is not always automatic.<sup>8</sup> Some students are able to memorize grammatical rules, classical formulas, or didactic texts, but still experience difficulties when applying those rules to actual Arabic passages.<sup>9</sup> This problem indicates that grammar instruction needs to move beyond rule memorization and become more connected to examples, exercises, and direct reading practice.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, effective grammar instruction should help students transform grammatical knowledge into functional reading competence.<sup>11</sup> Instructional materials play an important role in connecting grammar learning with reading development.<sup>12</sup> A well-designed grammar book can guide teachers in presenting concepts gradually, providing examples, offering exercises, and helping students apply grammatical rules in meaningful contexts.<sup>13</sup> In Arabic language learning, the selection of an appropriate textbook is especially important because the structure, language level, and pedagogical sequence of the material can influence students' comprehension and learning motivation.<sup>14</sup> Therefore,

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*Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature* 3, no. 3 (2020): 211–28, <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v3i3.13264>.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Alif Hasan, "Arabic Language Learning Curriculum Islamic Boarding School System," *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 4, no. 2 (2020): 138–52, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v4i2.9985>.

<sup>8</sup> Juhee Lee, Diane L. Schallert, and Eonsil Kim, "Effects of Extensive Reading and Translation Activities on Grammar Knowledge and Attitudes for EFL Adolescents," *System* 52 (2015): 38–50, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.04.016>.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Sya'dullah Fauzi, "Eksperimentasi Model Pembelajaran Problem Based Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Nahwu Di Kelas X SMA," *Jurnal Alfazuna: Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 5, no. 2 (2021): 235–60, <https://doi.org/10.15642/alfazuna.v5i02.678>.

<sup>10</sup> Anwar Sidik and Muassomah Muassomah, "Implementasi Metode Mind Mapping Dengan Menggunakan Media Power Point Dalam Pembelajaran Nahwu," *Alsina: Journal of Arabic Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021): 241–60, <https://doi.org/10.21580/alsina.3.2.6734>.

<sup>11</sup> Jaemyung Goo et al., "Implicit and Explicit Instruction in L2 Learning: Norris and Ortega (2000) Revisited and Updated," in *Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages*, ed. Patrick Rebuschat (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2015), 443–83, <https://doi.org/10.1075/sibil.48.18goo>.

<sup>12</sup> Suci Ramadhanti Febriani et al., "Design of Arabic Learning for Senior High School in the 21st Century," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 12, no. 1 (2020): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v12i1.5886>.

<sup>13</sup> Zahari Maskor et al., "Teaching and Learning Arabic Vocabulary: From a Teacher's Experiences," *Creative Education* 7, no. 3 (2016): 482–90, <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2016.73049>.

<sup>14</sup> Syaiful Mustofa, Suci Ramadhanti Febriani, and Faisal Mahmoud Adam Ibrahim, "The Improvement of Arabic Language Learning Program in Realizing the World Class University," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 13, no. 1 (2021): 53–72, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v13i1.7705>.

grammar books used in pesantren should not only introduce rules, but also support students in practicing how those rules operate in Arabic texts.<sup>15</sup> Within this context, Al-Wadlih becomes relevant as a grammar-based instructional text for supporting Arabic reading skills. The uploaded thesis explains that Al-Wadlih was selected because it contains basic Arabic grammatical rules, examples, and exercises that are considered suitable for strengthening students' reading ability in Islamic boarding schools. The same study was conducted at Mambaul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School in Tegal and Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Brebes, using a quantitative experimental approach supported by interviews, observation, questionnaires, and tests. The implementation was carried out in eight meetings, with each meeting lasting 45 minutes, and the learning process included opening activities, review questions, material explanation, exercises, and reading application. Although previous studies have discussed Arabic reading instruction, grammar teaching, and pesantren-based Arabic learning, specific attention to Al-Wadlih as a pedagogical tool for improving Arabic reading skills remains limited.<sup>16</sup> Most studies tend to focus on general Arabic teaching methods, curriculum models, learning media, or reading strategies, while fewer studies examine how a particular grammar book can be used systematically to improve reading performance in Islamic boarding schools.<sup>17</sup> This gap is important because pesantren students often encounter Arabic texts through grammar-based learning traditions, yet the effectiveness of specific grammar materials still requires empirical investigation.<sup>18</sup> Based on this gap, this article examines the use of Al-Wadlih grammar instruction in improving Arabic reading skills among secondary-level students in Islamic boarding schools. The article argues that Arabic reading improvement requires an instructional model that integrates

<sup>15</sup> Ahmad Nurcholis et al., "The Ontology of Arabic Curriculum at Pesantren Attahdzib Jombang," *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2020): 153–65, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v5i2.247>.

<sup>16</sup> Kanza Rufaida and Muassomah Muassomah, "Model Pembelajaran Flipped Classroom Dalam Pembelajaran Ketrampilan Membaca Di MTs Al-Hikmah Brebes," *Tarling: Journal of Language Education* 5, no. 1 (2021): 93–108, <https://doi.org/10.24090/tarling.v5i1.4369>.

<sup>17</sup> Zulfa Amalia Wahidah, Umi Baroroh, and Abdur Rasheed-Mahmoud Mukadam, "The Implementation of Eclectic Methods in Arabic Learning Based on All in One System Approach," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 13, no. 1 (2021): 90–107, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v13i1.6379>.

<sup>18</sup> Umi Chabibatus Zahro, Sofri Rizka Amalia, and Nur Fadilah Amin, "The Effectiveness of Direct Method in Arabic Language Learning," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 12, no. 1 (2020): 149–64, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v12i1.5775>.

grammar explanation, guided exercises, and direct reading application. By focusing on *Al-Wadlih*, this study contributes to Arabic language education by showing how a grammar book can function not only as a source of rules, but also as a practical bridge between syntactic knowledge and reading competence.

## Method

This study employed a quantitative experimental design to examine the effectiveness of *Al-Wadlih*-based grammar instruction in improving Arabic reading skills among secondary-level students in Islamic boarding schools.<sup>19</sup> The experimental design was selected because the study aimed to measure the effect of a specific instructional treatment, namely the use of *Al-Wadlih* in teaching Arabic grammar, on students' reading performance.<sup>20</sup> The independent variable was the use of *Al-Wadlih* as a grammar instructional text, while the dependent variable was students' Arabic reading skill.

The study was conducted in two Indonesian Islamic boarding schools: Mambaul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School in Tegal and Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Brebes. These two institutions were selected because both implemented Arabic grammar instruction as part of their reading skill development program. The research focused on second-grade secondary students, as this level was considered appropriate for grammar-based reading intervention. The original thesis states that the research sites were Mambaul Hikmah Tegal and Darussalam Brebes, with the research conducted from 15 March to 15 June 2024.

The population consisted of second-grade secondary students in both schools. At Mambaul Hikmah, the population consisted of 120 students, while at Darussalam, the population consisted of 150 students. The sample was selected using a random sampling procedure. In each school, class II-A, consisting of 36 students, was assigned as the experimental group, while class II-B, also consisting of 36 students, was assigned as the control group. Thus, the total sample involved 144 students across the two schools.

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<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Syaifullah et al., "The Application of Experiential Learning Model Perspective David A. Kolb to Improving Students' Reading Skill," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 13, no. 2 (2021): 208–30, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v13i2.8424>.

<sup>20</sup> Goo et al., "Implicit and Explicit Instruction in L2 Learning: Norris and Ortega (2000) Revisited and Updated."

The experimental group received Arabic grammar instruction using selected materials from *Al-Wadlih*, while the control group continued learning grammar through the previously used text, *Nazm al-‘Imrithi*. The intervention was conducted in eight meetings over approximately one month, following the regular grammar schedule of two meetings per week. The first meeting was used for orientation and pre-test administration, the second to seventh meetings were used for the instructional treatment, and the final meeting was used for the post-test. This treatment structure reflects the logic of experimental language instruction, in which a specific pedagogical intervention is compared with an existing instructional practice to identify measurable learning effects.<sup>21</sup>

The instructional procedure consisted of opening activities, review of previous materials, explanation of grammar concepts, guided exercises, and reading application. During the treatment, the teacher introduced selected grammar topics from *Al-Wadlih*, explained the rules through examples, guided students in completing exercises, and asked them to apply the rules in reading Arabic texts. This procedure was designed to connect explicit grammar instruction with meaningful reading practice.<sup>22</sup> The grammar topics included basic sentence structure, *i‘rāb*, *fā‘il*, *mubtada’* and *khavar*, *na‘t*, and *maf‘ūl bih*. This sequence was intended to help students connect grammatical knowledge with practical reading accuracy. The integration of grammar explanation and reading application is relevant in pesantren-based Arabic learning because *nahwu* and *sharaf* are commonly positioned as foundations for textual understanding.<sup>23</sup>

Data were collected through tests, observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The main quantitative data were obtained from pre-tests and post-tests administered to the experimental and control groups. The pre-test was used to identify students’ Arabic reading ability before the intervention, while the post-test was used to measure their reading ability after the intervention. Observation was used to document classroom implementation, students’ participation, and the teaching process. Interviews with Arabic teachers were conducted to obtain

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<sup>21</sup> Zahro, Amalia, and Amin, “The Effectiveness of Direct Method in Arabic Language Learning.”

<sup>22</sup> Fauzi, “Eksperimentasi Model Pembelajaran Problem Based Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Nahwu Di Kelas X SMA.”

<sup>23</sup> Ardiansyah and Muhammad, “Implementation of Integrative Arabic Grammar (Nahwu & Sharaf) Curriculum in Islamic Boarding School.”

supporting information about the implementation of *Al-Wadlih* in grammar-based reading instruction. The combination of test data and classroom-based supporting data helped the researcher interpret not only the statistical outcome, but also the instructional process behind the outcome.<sup>24</sup>

The reading test assessed students' ability to read Arabic texts accurately, understand the meaning of the text, and identify grammatical structures relevant to reading comprehension. The test items included multiple-choice questions, matching questions, true-false items, and reading tasks. These items were designed to measure both grammatical understanding and reading application. Reading assessment in Arabic should consider vocabulary recognition, textual comprehension, and the learner's ability to connect linguistic form with meaning.<sup>25</sup> In the preparatory stage, the researcher designed pre-test questions related to reading skill, including multiple-choice, matching, and true-false items based on the reading text.

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. First, students' pre-test and post-test scores were checked, coded, tabulated, and classified according to achievement levels. Second, the mean scores of the experimental and control groups were compared to identify changes in students' reading performance. Third, a t-test was used to determine whether the difference between pre-test and post-test results was statistically significant. The analysis focused on whether students who learned grammar through *Al-Wadlih* showed higher improvement in Arabic reading skill than those who continued using the previous grammar text. The use of statistical comparison was appropriate because the study sought to determine whether the observed improvement reflected a significant instructional effect.<sup>26</sup>

Before the intervention was implemented, institutional permission was obtained from the leaders of both Islamic boarding schools. The research activities were conducted within the regular learning schedule and did not disrupt the students' formal study program. Students' test results were used only for

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<sup>24</sup> Febriani et al., "Design of Arabic Learning for Senior High School in the 21st Century."

<sup>25</sup> Robbani and Romadhoni, "The Use of Dictionary for Arabic Language Textbook to Improve the Students' Reading Skill."

<sup>26</sup> Wekke, "Arabic Teaching and Learning: A Model from Indonesian Muslim Minority."

academic research purposes, and their identities were treated confidentially in the reporting process. The source document also explains that permission was requested from the school leaders before the experimental implementation.

## Result and Discussion

The implementation of Al-Wadlih-based grammar instruction was conducted in two Islamic boarding schools, namely Mambaul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School in Tegal and Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Brebes. In both schools, the intervention was carried out in eight meetings, with each meeting lasting 45 minutes. The instructional procedure followed five main stages: opening activity, review of previous materials, explanation of grammar concepts, guided exercises, and reading application. This sequence shows that Al-Wadlih was not used merely as a grammar reference, but as an instructional text that connected rule explanation with reading practice.

**Table 1.** Implementation of Al-Wadlih Grammar Instruction

| Research Site         | Meetings   | Duration        | Instructional Stages                                         | Main Orientation                  |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mambaul Hikmah, Tegal | 8 meetings | 45 minutes each | Opening, review, explanation, exercises, reading application | Grammar-based reading improvement |
| Darussalam, Brebes    | 8 meetings | 45 minutes each | Opening, review, explanation, exercises, reading application | Grammar-based reading improvement |

The statistical findings indicate that the use of Al-Wadlih had a positive effect on students' Arabic reading skills in both schools. At Mambaul Hikmah, the obtained t-value was 4.534, while the t-table values were 2.381 at the 0.01 significance level and 1.667 at the 0.05 significance level. Since the obtained t-value was higher than both critical values, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that Al-Wadlih-based grammar

instruction was effective in improving students' Arabic reading skills at Mambaul Hikmah.

At Darussalam, the obtained t-value was 3.125, while the t-table values were also 2.381 at the 0.01 significance level and 1.667 at the 0.05 significance level. This result also shows that the obtained t-value was higher than the critical values. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The finding confirms that Al-Wadlih-based grammar instruction was also effective in improving students' Arabic reading skills at Darussalam.

**Table 2.** Statistical Results of Al-Wadlih-Based Grammar Instruction

| Research Site         | Experimental Mean Gain | Control Mean Gain | t-observe | t-table 0.01 | t-table 0.05 | Interpretation |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Mambaul Hikmah, Tegal | 19.61                  | 14.72             | 4.534     | 2.381        | 1.667        | Significant    |
| Darussalam, Brebes    | 19.58                  | 16.33             | 3.125     | 2.381        | 1.667        | Significant    |

Although both schools showed significant improvement, the effect at Mambaul Hikmah was stronger than at Darussalam. The source document explains that this difference was influenced by several contextual factors, including differences in students' age, the existence of an Arabic-speaking policy at Mambaul Hikmah, special reading activities, and additional reading application lessons in the regular schedule. This indicates that the effectiveness of Al-Wadlih was strengthened when grammar instruction was supported by a wider Arabic learning environment.

The findings demonstrate that Al-Wadlih-based grammar instruction can improve Arabic reading skills when grammar learning is directly connected to reading application. This confirms that Arabic reading is not only a decoding activity, but also a syntactic and semantic process that requires students to

understand the function of words, sentence structure, and grammatical relations.<sup>27</sup> In this study, students did not only receive explanations of grammatical rules; they were also guided to apply those rules through exercises and reading practice.

The improvement in both research sites supports the argument that Arabic reading instruction becomes more effective when grammar is taught functionally. Grammar instruction that remains at the level of memorization may help students remember rules, but it does not always enable them to read Arabic texts accurately. The sequence used in this study, namely explanation, exercise, and reading application, helped students move from knowing grammatical rules to using them in real reading situations. This finding is in line with studies that emphasize the importance of integrative grammar learning in Islamic boarding school contexts.<sup>28</sup>

The effectiveness of *Al-Wadlih* can also be understood from the nature of the book itself. The source thesis describes *Al-Wadlih* as a grammar book that presents Arabic grammar in relatively simple contemporary language, includes examples and exercises, and follows a gradual arrangement of materials. These characteristics are pedagogically important because beginner and intermediate learners often struggle when grammar is presented only through abstract rules or classical poetic formulations. A grammar book becomes more useful for reading development when it provides clear examples, manageable explanations, and repeated opportunities for practice.<sup>29</sup>

The findings also indicate that textbook-based instruction remains highly relevant in pesantren education. In Islamic boarding schools, Arabic textbooks and grammar books are not merely learning resources, but also shape the rhythm, sequence, and orientation of classroom instruction. When the selected book matches students' level and learning needs, it can help teachers organize materials

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<sup>27</sup> Robbani and Romadhoni, "The Use of Dictionary for Arabic Language Textbook to Improve the Students' Reading Skill."

<sup>28</sup> Ardiansyah and Muhammad, "Implementation of Integrative Arabic Grammar (Nahwu & Sharaf) Curriculum in Islamic Boarding School."

<sup>29</sup> Fauzi, "Eksperimentasi Model Pembelajaran Problem Based Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Nahwu Di Kelas X SMA."

more effectively and help students understand grammar more systematically. This supports previous research showing that Arabic learning materials should be designed according to learners' level, institutional context, and target skill.<sup>30</sup>

The stronger result at Mambaul Hikmah suggests that the success of grammar-based reading instruction is influenced not only by the book, but also by the learning environment. The Arabic-speaking policy, special reading activities, and additional reading application sessions created more opportunities for students to encounter Arabic beyond formal grammar explanation. This means that Al-Wadlih worked more effectively when supported by a language environment that encouraged students to practice Arabic actively. Similar studies on Arabic learning environments have shown that institutional culture can strengthen students' exposure, motivation, and language practice.<sup>31</sup>

The findings also show that Arabic reading improvement requires a balance between explicit instruction and meaningful application. Explicit grammar explanation helps students understand the rules, while reading application helps them see how those rules function in actual texts. This balance is important because Arabic grammar can be cognitively demanding for students when presented in isolation. Previous research on language instruction also suggests that explicit teaching becomes more effective when learners are given opportunities to apply linguistic knowledge in meaningful tasks.<sup>32</sup>

In relation to reading pedagogy, the study contributes to the view that grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension should be integrated rather than separated. Students need grammatical awareness to identify sentence structure, vocabulary knowledge to understand meaning, and reading practice to build fluency. Therefore, the use of Al-Wadlih should not be understood simply as replacing one grammar book with another, but as reorganizing grammar

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<sup>30</sup> Febriani et al., "Design of Arabic Learning for Senior High School in the 21st Century."

<sup>31</sup> M. Fairuz Rosyid, "Pengembangan Bi'ah Lughawiyyah Oleh Himpunan Mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Di IAIN Pekalongan," *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 4, no. 1 (2020): 25–40, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v4i1.8185>.

<sup>32</sup> Goo et al., "Implicit and Explicit Instruction in L2 Learning: Norris and Ortega (2000) Revisited and Updated."

instruction into a more practical reading-oriented model. This is consistent with studies showing that reading development is supported by vocabulary assistance, guided comprehension, and repeated engagement with texts.<sup>33</sup>

Another important point is that *Al-Wadlih* helped reduce the gap between rule memorization and textual understanding. In many *pesantren* contexts, students may memorize grammatical texts but still find it difficult to apply those rules when reading Arabic passages. The present findings show that this gap can be reduced when grammar instruction includes examples, exercises, and direct reading application. This strengthens the argument that Arabic grammar learning should be directed toward language use, not only toward rule retention.<sup>34</sup>

The study also has practical implications for Arabic teachers in Islamic boarding schools. Teachers should not use *Al-Wadlih* only by reading and explaining its rules, but should transform each lesson into a reading activity. For example, after explaining *fa'il*, *mubtada'*, *khobar*, *na't*, or *maf'ul bih*, teachers can ask students to identify those structures in short Arabic texts, read the text aloud, explain the syntactic position of selected words, and discuss the main idea of the passage. This type of instruction can make grammar learning more active, contextual, and directly relevant to reading skill development.<sup>35</sup>

However, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the study. The research was conducted in two Islamic boarding schools and focused on second-grade secondary students. Although the statistical results were significant, future studies should involve more varied *pesantren* contexts, longer intervention periods, delayed post-tests, and qualitative analysis of students' reading errors. Future research may also compare *Al-Wadlih* with other grammar texts to examine which features of grammar books most strongly support Arabic reading development.

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<sup>33</sup> Khezrlou, Ellis, and Sadeghi, "Effects of Computer-Assisted Glosses on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition and Reading Comprehension in Three Learning Conditions."

<sup>34</sup> Lee, Schallert, and Kim, "Effects of Extensive Reading and Translation Activities on Grammar Knowledge and Attitudes for EFL Adolescents."

<sup>35</sup> Sidik and Muassomah, "Implementasi Metode Mind Mapping Dengan Menggunakan Media Power Point Dalam Pembelajaran Nahwu."

Overall, this study confirms that *Al-Wadlih*-based grammar instruction is effective in improving Arabic reading skills in Islamic boarding schools. Its effectiveness lies in the integration of grammar explanation, guided exercises, and reading application. The findings suggest that Arabic reading development in pesantren can be strengthened when grammar books are used not only as sources of rules, but as pedagogical bridges between syntactic knowledge and textual comprehension.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that *Al-Wadlih*-based grammar instruction is effective in improving Arabic reading skills among secondary-level students in Islamic boarding schools. The findings from Mambaul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School in Tegal and Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Brebes show that students who learned Arabic grammar through *Al-Wadlih* experienced significant improvement in reading performance. The effectiveness of this instruction can be seen from the integration of grammar explanation, guided exercises, and direct reading application. Rather than treating grammar as a set of rules to be memorized, the use of *Al-Wadlih* helped students connect syntactic knowledge with practical reading accuracy, especially in identifying sentence structures, understanding grammatical functions, and reading Arabic texts more confidently.

The main contribution of this study lies in its emphasis on the functional role of grammar books in pesantren-based Arabic learning. *Al-Wadlih* is not only useful as a grammar reference, but also as a pedagogical bridge between *nahwu* mastery and Arabic reading competence. This study suggests that Arabic reading instruction in Islamic boarding schools should combine clear grammar explanation, sufficient examples, structured exercises, and continuous reading practice. However, the study was limited to two Islamic boarding schools and a relatively short intervention period. Future research may involve broader pesantren contexts, longer treatment duration, delayed post-tests, and deeper analysis of students' reading errors to examine the long-term impact of *Al-Wadlih*-based grammar instruction on Arabic literacy development.

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