

FESTIVAL-BASED ARABIC CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF ARABIC STORYTELLING IN STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AT PMDG PUTRI CAMPUS 1

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Arabic Storytelling in the Arabic Language Festival as a strategy for festival-based Arabic curriculum development at PMDG Putri Campus 1. The research aims to analyze how storytelling activities contribute to strengthening students' communicative competence through experiential and performance-based learning. This study employed a qualitative case study design involving Arabic teachers, festival organizers, language supervisors, judges, and student participants. Data were collected through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that Arabic Storytelling functioned not merely as an extracurricular competition but as a curriculum enrichment practice integrated into the pesantren's communicative Arabic learning ecosystem. The activity strengthened students' fluency, pronunciation accuracy, confidence, emotional expression, public speaking ability, and spontaneous interaction in Arabic. Furthermore, the festival contributed to strengthening **bi'ah lughawiyah** by creating authentic and collaborative communicative environments beyond classroom instruction. The study concludes that festival-based language activities possess significant potential for developing communicative Arabic curricula through immersive and experiential learning practices. Theoretically, this study contributes to communicative Arabic pedagogy by introducing festival-based curriculum development as an alternative framework for strengthening communicative competence in Islamic boarding schools.

Keywords: *Arabic Storytelling, curriculum development, communicative competence, experiential learning, Arabic festival, pesantren.*

A. INTRODUCTION

The development of Arabic language education in Islamic boarding schools has increasingly shifted from a grammar-oriented paradigm toward a communicative and contextual learning orientation. Contemporary Arabic pedagogy emphasizes that language

learning should not merely focus on mastering linguistic structures, but also on enabling learners to use language meaningfully in authentic social interaction. In this regard, communicative competence has become one of the primary objectives of Arabic language instruction in the twenty-first century

because it integrates grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies within real communicative situations (Mursyidan et al., 2025).

Recent studies indicate that communicative approaches in Arabic learning contribute significantly to students' speaking fluency, confidence, interactional ability, and contextual language use. The communicative language teaching approach encourages student-centered learning environments where learners actively construct meaning through interaction, collaboration, and performance-based activities rather than passive memorization (Pebrian et al., 2020). Furthermore, experiential learning models have been proven effective in strengthening communicative competence because students learn language through direct experience, reflection, role-play, performance, and authentic participation in social contexts (Wibowo et al., 2024). These findings suggest that curriculum innovation in Arabic education requires not only classroom instruction but also immersive and participatory learning ecosystems.

Within pesantren education, extracurricular and institutional language activities frequently function as an extension of the formal curriculum. Such activities create what scholars describe as an "invisible curriculum" or **hidden curriculum**, where students develop linguistic habits, cultural awareness, discipline, and communicative behavior

through continuous interaction within the educational environment (Subakir et al., 2025). In Arabic learning contexts, language festivals, debates, speech contests, storytelling competitions, and language immersion programs contribute substantially to strengthening **bi'ah lughawiyyah** as an ecosystem of communicative learning. These activities provide authentic opportunities for students to practice language creatively and publicly while integrating emotional engagement, collaboration, and performance-based communication.

One of the innovative programs reflecting this curriculum orientation is the Arabic Language Festival organized by Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri Campus 1 in commemoration of the institution's centennial celebration. Among the competitions conducted in the festival, Arabic Storytelling emerged as a significant educational medium for developing students' communicative Arabic competence. The competition required participants to demonstrate pronunciation accuracy, fluency, expression, narrative structure, audience engagement, and spontaneous communication skills within performative storytelling contexts. Beyond being a linguistic competition, the activity represented a curriculum enrichment strategy integrating communicative learning, creativity, confidence-building, and experiential pedagogy into the broader Arabic education system of the pesantren.

Several previous studies have discussed communicative competence, contextual Arabic learning, multicultural approaches, and experiential pedagogy in foreign language education (Haq et al., 2025; Wibowo et al., 2024). Other studies also explored immersive extracurricular strategies and language environments as supporting elements for Arabic learning development (Cherkaoui, 2025; Subakir et al., 2025). However, limited research specifically examines how festival-based Arabic programs function as curriculum development strategies within pesantren institutions, particularly through Arabic storytelling competitions as a medium for strengthening communicative competence. Existing literature tends to focus either on classroom instruction or conceptual communicative models, while the role of institutional language festivals as curriculum enrichment practices remains underexplored.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze how Arabic Storytelling activities in the Arabic Language Festival at PMDG Putri Campus 1 contribute to festival-based Arabic curriculum development and strengthen students' communicative competence. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the discourse of communicative Arabic pedagogy and curriculum development in Islamic boarding schools, while practically offering an alternative model of experiential and performance-based

Arabic learning applicable to similar educational institutions.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to explore the role of Arabic Storytelling activities in the Arabic Language Festival as a strategy for Arabic curriculum development at PMDG Putri Campus 1. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because the research focused on understanding educational phenomena, social interactions, institutional practices, and curriculum implementation within their natural setting (Febriani et al., 2025). The study particularly examined how festival-based language activities contribute to strengthening students' communicative competence through experiential and performance-based learning experiences.

The research was conducted at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri Campus 1 during the implementation of the Arabic Language Festival held in commemoration of the institution's centennial celebration. The participants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in the Arabic Storytelling competition and curriculum activities. The participants consisted of the festival committee, Arabic language teachers, language supervisors, judges, and selected student participants involved in the semifinal and final rounds of the

competition. Purposive sampling was utilized because qualitative research emphasizes information-rich participants who possess deep understanding of the investigated phenomenon (Alvadina et al., 2024).

Data were collected through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation techniques. Participatory observation was conducted during the storytelling competition to examine students' communicative performances, interaction patterns, language use, audience engagement, and learning atmosphere within the festival activities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, organizers, and participants to obtain in-depth information regarding the objectives of the festival, curriculum integration, communicative learning experiences, and perceived educational impacts. Documentation data included festival guidelines, scoring rubrics, institutional reports, photos, posters, and students' performance records. The triangulation of observation, interviews, and documentation was intended to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Setiyawan et al., 2025).

Table 1. Research Participants and Their Roles

N o	Participant Category	Number of Participa nts	Roles in the Research
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1	Arabic Language Teachers	4	Provided information regarding Arabic curriculum implementation, communicative learning strategies, and students' language development
2	Festival Committee Members	5	Explained the objectives, organization, and educational orientation of the Arabic Language Festival
3	Language Supervisors (Musyriifah al-Lughah)	3	Described the role of language supervision in strengthening <i>bi'ah lughawiyyah</i> and students' communicative practices
4	Judges of Arabic Storytelling Competition	3	Provided insights regarding assessment criteria, students' communicative performance, and evaluation standards
5	Student Participants	12	Shared experiential learning experiences, communicative

			ve challenges, and personal reflections during the storytelling competition
6	Audience Representatives	4	Provided perspectives regarding audience engagement, communicative interaction, and festival atmosphere
	Total Participants	31	

This table presents the categories of research participants involved in the study and their respective contributions to the data collection process concerning festival-based Arabic curriculum development through Arabic Storytelling activities at PMDG Putri Campus 1.

The data analysis process followed the interactive qualitative analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Initially, the collected data were organized and reduced according to themes related to communicative competence, experiential learning, and curriculum development. Subsequently, the data were systematically presented in narrative and thematic forms to identify patterns, relationships, and educational meanings emerging from the Arabic Storytelling activities. Finally,

conclusions were continuously verified through repeated interpretation and comparison among data sources to ensure consistency and validity of the findings (Mimi, 2025).

To ensure research validity, this study applied source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from teachers, organizers, and students. Technique triangulation was carried out through cross-checking observation results, interview data, and documentation findings. Meanwhile, member checking was conducted by confirming several interview interpretations with participants to minimize researcher bias and strengthen the accuracy of interpretation. These validation strategies are widely recommended in qualitative educational research to ensure the reliability and authenticity of findings (McLeod et al., 2021).

This study also adopted the perspective of experiential learning in interpreting the educational value of Arabic Storytelling activities. Experiential learning emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs through direct participation, reflective experience, interaction, and active engagement in authentic situations (Rochmat et al., 2024). ([Jurnal Ilmiah UMM][6]) In this context, the Arabic Storytelling competition functioned not merely as a language contest but also as a

curriculum enrichment practice fostering communicative competence, creativity, confidence, collaboration, and public speaking skills among students.

RESULTS

Arabic Storytelling as a Festival-Based Curriculum Enrichment Program

The findings revealed that the Arabic Storytelling competition functioned not merely as a linguistic contest but as a curriculum enrichment strategy integrated into the broader Arabic educational ecosystem at PMDG Putri Campus 1. Based on observational data, the competition was systematically designed to encourage students' active use of Arabic in authentic communicative situations. The festival atmosphere created an immersive linguistic environment where participants demonstrated storytelling performances involving pronunciation accuracy, fluency, intonation, emotional expression, audience interaction, and spontaneous communicative responses.

During the semifinal round, students appeared highly engaged in presenting Arabic narratives with expressive gestures and contextual language use. Observation results showed that participants not only memorized scripts but also attempted to communicate meaning interactively with audiences. The audience's responses, applause, and emotional reactions indicated that storytelling performances

successfully stimulated communicative interaction within the competition setting. Documentation data in the form of scoring rubrics further demonstrated that assessment criteria emphasized communicative aspects such as fluency (*thalaqah*), pronunciation (*makharij al-huruf*), expression, and audience engagement rather than grammatical accuracy alone. An Arabic language supervisor explained:

"Arabic Storytelling was intentionally designed not only as entertainment but as part of language education. Students are trained to communicate ideas confidently in Arabic before a public audience." (Interview with Arabic Language Supervisor, October 2025)

This finding indicates that the festival represented an institutional effort to transform extracurricular language activities into curriculum-supporting pedagogical practices. Documentation from the festival committee also showed that Arabic Storytelling was positioned as one of the flagship programs in commemorating the centennial celebration of Gontor, reflecting the pesantren's commitment to strengthening communicative Arabic education through experiential activities.

Table 2. Components of Arabic Storytelling Activities

No	Activity	Description of	Targeted Communication	Curriculum
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	Component	Activities	Communicative Skills	Contribution			ons, and emotional intonation		engagement	
1	Story Selection and Adaptation	Students selected and adapted Arabic stories suitable for performance and audience engagement	Vocabulary enrichment and contextual language use	Encouraged creative language production and contextual learning						
2	Script Preparation	Participants prepared Arabic storytelling scripts with guidance from teachers and mentors	Sentence construction and narrative organization	Strengthened structured communicative expression		5	Audience Interaction	Students responded to audience reactions and maintained interaction during performances	Spontaneous communication and interactional competence	Encouraged authentic communicative practices
3	Pronunciation Practice (Makharrij al-Huruf)	Students practiced pronunciation, articulation, and intonation repeatedly before performance	Pronunciation accuracy and fluency	Improved oral communication quality		6	Peer Collaboration and Rehearsal	Students practiced collaboratively and exchanged feedback during preparation sessions	Collaborative communication and peer learning	Supported student-centered and participatory learning
4	Expressive Storytelling Performance	Participants delivered stories using gestures, facial expressions	Public speaking and expressive communication	Developed communicative confidence and emotional		7	Judges' Evaluation Session	Judges assessed storytelling performances based on communicative and performative criteria	Communicative responsiveness and performance awareness	Reinforced performance-based learning evaluation
						8	Reflection and	Teachers and supervisors	Self-evaluation and	Promoted reflective

	Feedback	ors provide d reflection ns and feedbac k after perform ances	communi cative improve ment	e and experien tial learning practice s
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This table illustrates the major components of Arabic Storytelling activities implemented during the Arabic Language Festival and their contributions to strengthening students' communicative competence and Arabic curriculum development at PMDG Putri Campus 1.

Strengthening Students' Communicative Competence through Performance-Based Learning

The findings further demonstrated that Arabic Storytelling significantly contributed to strengthening students' communicative competence. Observational data revealed improvements in students' speaking confidence, spontaneity, pronunciation clarity, vocabulary use, and interactional ability during storytelling performances. Students appeared more confident in using Arabic publicly compared to ordinary classroom learning contexts.

Several participants stated that storytelling activities provided opportunities to practice Arabic naturally and emotionally rather than merely memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules. One participant explained:

"When participating in storytelling, I learned how to express

emotions, interact with audiences, and speak Arabic more naturally. It was different from learning inside the classroom." (Interview with Student Participant, October 2025)

Another participant emphasized:

"The competition trained us to think quickly in Arabic because sometimes we had to respond spontaneously to audience reactions and judges' questions." (Interview with Student Participant, October 2025)

These findings suggest that storytelling activities encouraged spontaneous communication and contextual language use, which are essential components of communicative competence. Observation results further indicated that students gradually developed better pronunciation, intonation, and narrative organization throughout the competition stages. Teachers also confirmed that students who actively participated in storytelling activities tended to demonstrate higher confidence and fluency in daily Arabic communication within the pesantren environment.

Documentation in the form of judges' evaluation sheets showed that communicative indicators became central aspects of assessment. Students were evaluated based on fluency, audience interaction, emotional delivery, creativity, and clarity of message

delivery. This indicates that the competition emphasized functional language use and communicative performance rather than solely linguistic accuracy.

Table 3. Findings on Students' Communicative Competence Development

No	Aspect of Communicative Competence	Observation Findings	Interview Findings	Documentation Evidence
1	Fluency in Speaking	Students delivered stories more smoothly and confidently during semifinal and final performances	Participants reported increased confidence in speaking Arabic publicly	Judges' scoring sheets showed improvement in fluency indicators
2	Pronunciation Accuracy (<i>Makharij al-Huruf</i>)	Students demonstrated clearer articulation and better pronunciation during storytelling performances	Teachers explained that repeated rehearsals improved pronunciation quality	Evaluation rubrics emphasized pronunciation and articulation accuracy
3	Vocabulary Usage	Participants used varied	Students stated that storytelling	Story scripts and performance

		Arabic vocabulary appropriate to narrative contexts	Students enriched their Arabic vocabulary	Students reflected contextual vocabulary use
4	Emotional Expression and Intonation	Students expressed emotions through gestures, facial expressions, and voice modulation	Judges noted that expressive storytelling increased audience engagement	Video recordings documented expressive communication performances
5	Public Speaking Confidence	Participants appeared more confident when speaking before large audiences	Students admitted that storytelling reduced anxiety in public communication	Observation notes indicated higher participation and stage confidence
6	Spontaneous Interaction	Students responded naturally to audience reactions and judges' questions	Participants reported becoming more spontaneous in Arabic communication	Competition assessments included interaction and responsiveness criteria
7	Audience Engage	Performers successfully	Teachers highlighted	Audience responses and

	ment Skills	maintained audience attention throughout storytelling sessions	students' ability to communicate messages interactively	applause were documented during performances
8	Collaborative Communication	Students practiced collaboratively during rehearsals and peer evaluations	Participants emphasized the importance of teamwork in preparation stages	Rehearsal schedules and mentoring records reflected collaborative practices

This table summarizes the findings related to the development of students' communicative competence through Arabic Storytelling activities based on observation, interview, and documentation data collected during the Arabic Language Festival at PMDG Putri Campus 1.

Arabic Storytelling and Experiential Learning Practices

Another important finding was that Arabic Storytelling reflected the implementation of experiential learning within Arabic curriculum development. Observation results demonstrated that students learned Arabic through direct participation, repeated performance practice, peer collaboration, reflection, and public interaction. The learning process occurred not only during the

competition but also throughout preparation stages, rehearsals, mentoring sessions, and peer evaluations.

Teachers explained that students independently searched for Arabic stories, adapted scripts, practiced pronunciation, and developed expressive communication techniques. One Arabic teacher stated:

“Students experienced the learning process directly. They explored vocabulary, practiced speaking repeatedly, corrected each other, and built confidence through continuous performance preparation.” (Interview with Arabic Teacher, October 2025)

Observational findings also showed collaborative learning dynamics among participants. Students frequently practiced together, exchanged feedback, and helped peers improve pronunciation and performance techniques. This collaborative atmosphere strengthened both linguistic competence and social interaction skills.

Furthermore, documentation data revealed that the festival was supported institutionally through structured scheduling, mentoring mechanisms, scoring guidelines, and language supervision systems. This indicates that Arabic Storytelling was not conducted as a spontaneous entertainment activity but as a systematically organized educational program integrated into the

pesantren's language development agenda.

The Role of Festival Activities in Developing the Arabic Curriculum Ecosystem

The findings also demonstrated that the Arabic Language Festival contributed to the development of a broader Arabic curriculum ecosystem within the pesantren environment. Observation results indicated that the festival succeeded in creating an intensive *bi'ah lughawiyyah* where Arabic became actively practiced, displayed, and appreciated collectively. During the festival, students communicated using Arabic expressions in competitions, announcements, interactions, and audience responses. According to the festival committee:

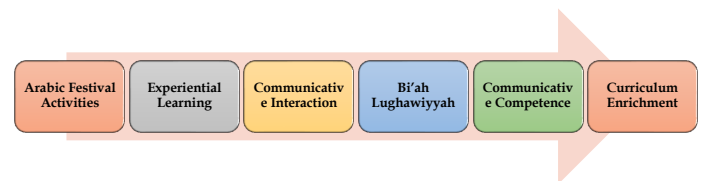
"The purpose of this festival was not merely competition, but creating enthusiasm for Arabic among all students. We wanted Arabic to become a living language within the pesantren environment." (Interview with Festival Committee Member, October 2025)

Documentation data further showed that the festival involved multiple language activities such as speeches, debates, poetry performances, and storytelling competitions. These activities collectively functioned as institutional strategies for strengthening Arabic

exposure and communicative practice beyond formal classroom instruction.

The findings therefore indicate that festival-based activities played a significant role in supporting curriculum development through experiential, communicative, and participatory learning practices. Arabic Storytelling became an educational medium that integrated language mastery, creativity, emotional expression, confidence-building, and public communication skills within a holistic Arabic learning environment at PMDG Putri Campus 1.

Figure 1. Festival-Based Arabic Curriculum Development Model



DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that Arabic Storytelling within the Arabic Language Festival at PMDG Putri Campus 1 functioned not merely as an extracurricular competition but as a strategic instrument of festival-based Arabic curriculum development. The activity created an experiential and communicative learning environment where students actively used Arabic in authentic public interaction. This finding reinforces the argument that communicative competence can be strengthened more effectively through contextual and participatory language

experiences rather than through grammar-oriented instruction alone. In contemporary Arabic pedagogy, communicative competence is understood as the ability to use language meaningfully, interactively, and socially within real communication contexts (Mursyidan et al., 2025). Therefore, the storytelling competition provided students with opportunities to integrate linguistic knowledge, emotional expression, audience awareness, and spontaneous interaction simultaneously.

The observational findings indicating students' increased confidence, fluency, and interactional ability support previous studies emphasizing the effectiveness of communicative and experiential learning approaches in foreign language education. Wibowo et al. (2024) explained that experiential learning enables students to internalize language through direct participation, reflection, performance, and collaborative interaction. Similarly, the Arabic Storytelling competition allowed students to experience authentic communicative situations where language functioned as a medium of expression rather than merely an academic subject. In this context, the festival transformed Arabic learning into a lived communicative experience embedded within social and cultural interaction.

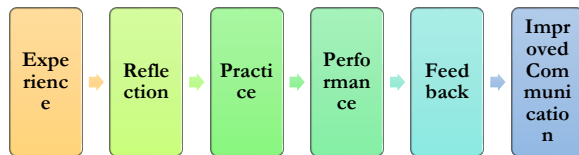
Furthermore, this study reveals that festival-based learning activities contributed significantly to the

development of students' communicative competence, particularly in terms of pronunciation accuracy, fluency, emotional delivery, and public speaking ability. These findings align with the communicative language teaching framework, which emphasizes meaningful communication, learner interaction, and functional language use as central goals of language education (Murtadho et al., 2025). Unlike conventional classroom instruction that often prioritizes grammatical mastery, Arabic Storytelling positioned students as active language performers who negotiated meaning before real audiences. This condition encouraged spontaneous communication and reduced students' anxiety in using Arabic publicly.

Another important finding concerns the role of Arabic Storytelling as part of the hidden curriculum within the pesantren educational system. The study found that the festival created a collective linguistic atmosphere where Arabic was practiced, appreciated, and socially reinforced through institutional culture. This finding supports Subakir et al. (2025), who argued that language environments function as invisible curriculum structures shaping students' communicative habits and behavioral patterns through daily interaction. In PMDG Putri Campus 1, the Arabic Language Festival strengthened **bi'ah lughawiyyah** by transforming Arabic into a socially meaningful and publicly

celebrated language. Consequently, students were not only learning Arabic cognitively but also internalizing linguistic confidence, discipline, collaboration, and expressive communication through social participation.

Figure 2. Experiential Learning Cycle in Arabic Storytelling



The findings also indicate that Arabic Storytelling integrated several dimensions of twenty-first century learning, including creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and performance literacy. Students were required to interpret stories, adapt expressions, organize narratives, manage audience interaction, and perform emotionally in Arabic. Such practices reflect current curriculum development trends emphasizing learner-centered pedagogy and competency-based education. According to Haq et al. (2025), contextual and multicultural language learning approaches are essential for fostering communicative competence because they engage learners cognitively, emotionally, and socially within authentic educational experiences. The storytelling competition therefore became an interdisciplinary learning medium integrating linguistic competence with creativity and emotional intelligence.

From the perspective of curriculum development, this study demonstrates that institutional festivals can function as curriculum enrichment mechanisms complementing formal classroom instruction. The Arabic Language Festival at PMDG Putri Campus 1 did not operate separately from the curriculum; rather, it expanded the curriculum into performative, collaborative, and experiential domains of learning. This finding confirms the argument of Syifa et al. (2025) that curriculum development in Arabic education should involve adaptive and innovative learning ecosystems beyond conventional instructional models. The integration of competitions, performances, and immersive language activities into educational programs enables institutions to create holistic language learning environments supporting both academic competence and communicative readiness.

Another significant contribution of this study lies in its focus on festival-based curriculum development, which remains underexplored in Arabic language education research. Previous studies primarily discussed communicative approaches, language environments, or experiential learning separately (Cherkaoui, 2025; Rochmat et al., 2024). However, limited attention has been given to how institutional language festivals systematically function as curriculum development strategies within pesantren education. This study

therefore offers a conceptual contribution by positioning Arabic festivals not merely as ceremonial or extracurricular activities but as pedagogical instruments capable of strengthening communicative competence, language immersion, and institutional curriculum goals simultaneously.

The centennial context of Gontor also adds symbolic and institutional significance to the findings. The festival reflected the pesantren's long-standing commitment to maintaining Arabic as a living language within educational culture while simultaneously adapting to contemporary communicative learning paradigms. Through Arabic Storytelling, PMDG Putri Campus 1 demonstrated that curriculum innovation in pesantren institutions can emerge from culturally rooted educational traditions integrated with modern communicative pedagogies. Thus, the study highlights how pesantren-based curriculum development can preserve institutional identity while responding dynamically to contemporary educational demands.

Overall, this study confirms that Arabic Storytelling served as an effective medium for strengthening students' communicative competence through experiential, performative, and socially interactive learning processes. The findings imply that Arabic curriculum development should not rely exclusively on classroom-centered instruction but should also incorporate immersive institutional programs capable of creating

authentic communicative experiences. Festival-based language activities therefore possess substantial potential to function as sustainable curriculum enrichment strategies within Arabic language education in Islamic boarding schools and other similar educational institutions.

Table 4. Contributions of Arabic Storytelling to Curriculum Development

No	Curriculum Development Aspect	Contributions of Arabic Storytelling	Educational Impact
1	Communicative Arabic Learning	Encouraged authentic and meaningful Arabic interaction through public storytelling performances	Improved students' communicative competence and speaking fluency
2	Experiential Learning Integration	Engaged students in direct participation, rehearsal, reflection, and performance-based learning	Strengthened active learning and communicative confidence
3	Curriculum Enrichment	Expanded Arabic learning beyond classroom instruction through festival-based activities	Created holistic and immersive learning experiences
4	Strengthening <i>Bi'ah</i>	Fostered a supportive	Increased students'

	<i>Lughawiyah</i>	Arabic-speaking environment during festival activities	motivation to use Arabic in daily interaction
5	Hidden Curriculum Development	Cultivated discipline, responsibility, confidence, and collaboration through storytelling preparation	Developed students' character and social communication skills
6	Student-Centered Learning	Positioned students as active performers and communicators rather than passive learners	Enhanced creativity, participation, and learner autonomy
7	Performance-Based Assessment	Applied communicative and performative evaluation criteria such as fluency, expression, and audience engagement	Promoted functional and contextual language assessment
8	Integration of 21st Century Skills	Combined communication, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking within storytelling activities	Prepared students for modern communicative and social challenges
9	Institutional Curriculum Innovation	Demonstrated the role of language festivals as strategic	Supported adaptive and innovative Arabic

		curriculum development instruments	curriculum practices
10	Cultural and Emotional Engagement	Connected Arabic learning with emotional expression, narrative appreciation, and public interaction	Increased students' emotional involvement in language learning

This table presents the major contributions of Arabic Storytelling activities to Arabic curriculum development at PMDG Putri Campus 1, particularly in strengthening communicative learning, experiential pedagogy, and institutional language culture.

D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Arabic Storytelling competition within the Arabic Language Festival at PMDG Putri Campus 1 functioned as an effective strategy for festival-based Arabic curriculum development. The activity was not merely a ceremonial or extracurricular program, but an experiential pedagogical practice that strengthened students' communicative competence through authentic language use, public interaction, emotional expression, and performance-based learning. The findings demonstrate that students developed greater fluency, confidence, pronunciation accuracy, interactional ability, and communicative responsiveness through direct

participation in storytelling performances. Consequently, Arabic learning in the pesantren context extended beyond formal classroom instruction into immersive and socially meaningful educational experiences.

The study also reveals that festival-based activities contributed significantly to strengthening the institutional **bi'ah lughawiyyah** as part of the hidden curriculum within the pesantren educational system. Through Arabic Storytelling, students were encouraged to internalize Arabic not only as an academic subject but also as a communicative and cultural practice embedded in daily institutional life. The festival created collaborative and participatory learning spaces where communicative competence was developed through interaction, creativity, and collective engagement. This indicates that curriculum development in Arabic education can be effectively enriched through institutional language festivals integrating communicative pedagogy, experiential learning, and performance-oriented educational approaches.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse of communicative Arabic pedagogy by introducing festival-based curriculum development as an alternative framework for strengthening Arabic communicative competence in Islamic boarding schools. Practically, the findings imply that Arabic curriculum innovation

should incorporate immersive extracurricular programs capable of creating authentic communication environments beyond classroom boundaries. Therefore, educational institutions, particularly pesantren-based Arabic programs, may consider integrating storytelling competitions, language festivals, debates, and performative activities as sustainable curriculum enrichment strategies to support holistic Arabic language development in the contemporary educational era.

This study implies that Arabic language curriculum development requires a broader pedagogical orientation that combines formal instruction with experiential and communicative learning ecosystems. Arabic Storytelling demonstrates that students' communicative competence develops more effectively when language learning is embedded within authentic social interaction, public performance, and emotionally engaging activities. Therefore, Arabic educational institutions should move beyond grammar-dominated instructional traditions toward more participatory and student-centered curriculum models emphasizing meaningful communication and contextual language use.

The findings also imply that institutional language festivals possess strategic educational value in strengthening language immersion environments and cultivating students'

confidence, creativity, and public communication skills. In this regard, curriculum developers and policymakers in Islamic boarding schools may utilize festival-based activities as instruments for integrating hidden curriculum values, communicative pedagogy, and twenty-first century competencies into Arabic education. Future research may further explore the long-term impact of festival-based learning on students' communicative proficiency, identity formation, and intercultural competence across broader educational contexts.

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