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LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY THE WRONG MAJOR STUDENTS IN ARABIC EDUCATION TO ENHANCE MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ARABIC

Nabila Salsabila, Muhammad Fadli Ramadhan, and Achmad Tito Rusady
*Department of Arabic Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang,
Malang, Indonesia*

*Corresponding author's E-mail address: nabilaslsa26@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the low Arabic language learning motivation experienced by students with the wrong majors in the Arabic Language Education department in Malang. This study aims to identify the types of learning strategies used by students in the wrong major of Arabic Education on the enhancement of Arabic learning motivation. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods using a convergent parallel research design. Data was collected quantitatively through questionnaires containing 50 statements and given to 30 the wrong primary Arabic students from 3 universities in Malang and qualitatively through interviews. Quantitative data analysis uses descriptive analysis, while qualitative data analysis involves data reduction, display, and conclusion. The findings of this research indicate that the most commonly used learning strategies by students are affective, metacognitive, and memory strategies. Meanwhile, the least favored learning strategy is the cognitive strategy. Additionally, the research shows that the wrong primary students of Arabic Education tend to choose indirect rather than direct strategies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic, renowned as one of the world's most ancient languages, is the official language in 27 countries worldwide and is spoken by over 420 million people. Its prominent association with Islam and its particular significance for Muslims are particularly evident in countries like Indonesia, where the majority of the population adheres to the Islamic faith. In Indonesia, Arabic holds a revered status as it is regarded as the key to delving deeply into the study of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith, both originally written in Arabic (Dewi, 2016; Mahfud et al., 2021). This unique context has given rise to a significant surge in the demand for and interest in learning Arabic. Undoubtedly, Arabic has emerged as the popular foreign language taught in Indonesian schools, following only English (Muradi et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the practical situation of Arabic language education in Indonesia shows a contrasting phenomenon, where a common challenge in Arabic teaching and learning is the lack of learning motivation and enthusiasm portrayed by Arabic learners (Albantani & Madkur, 2019; Fauzi & Anindiati, 2021; Inah & Khairunnisa, 2019).

Arabic holds a significant and revered status in Indonesia, primarily due to its role as the language of the Qur'an and Hadith, the foundational texts of Islamic teachings (Agustini, 2023; Sa'dudin et al., 2022; Hamidah, 2019). Mastery of Arabic is considered essential for Indonesian Muslims to deeply understand Islamic teachings and avoid misinterpretation of religious texts (Agustini, 2023; Sa'dudin et al., 2022). Arabic education is thus emphasized in both formal and informal Islamic educational institutions, with its teaching evolving from a focus on worship and Qur'anic recitation to more advanced studies in Islamic law and civilization (Hollilullah & Larhzizer, 2020). Furthermore, learning Arabic is seen as both a necessity and a responsibility for Muslims, extending to parents ensuring their children acquire Arabic skills. The language's importance also extends to professional and diplomatic contexts in contemporary Indonesia (Hamidah, 2019).

The lack of interest and motivation in learning Arabic can also be observed among university students in the Arabic education department. *Higher education* is a secondary level designed to prepare students to have academic and practical abilities relevant to their chosen field of study (Zakiyatul Masriah, 2018). The important role of higher education in society has been played by educating and a place of discovering science and humanities which contributes to advancements in local, national, and global development (Chankseliani et al., 2021; Lovakov et al., 2022). Therefore, aligning of a student's interest with their chosen major is crucial for the success of its goals. This alignment not only affects to the quality of their learning outcomes but also impacts their future career prospects.

Several profound issues reveal a mismatch between students' interests and their chosen majors. Typically, the selection of the wrong major is influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors often include a need for more self-awareness and understanding of self-skills and interests in the chosen field of study, as well as an inadequate knowledge of the scope of the major. External factors may involve parental influence or following the path of friends without proper consideration (Gusti, 2019; Lailaturrohmah et al., 2023). Research indicates that choosing the wrong major significantly impacts students' academic performance and psychological well-being. Studies show that approximately 30% of Indonesian university students feel they have chosen the wrong major, with 87% of students reporting difficulties in major selection according to earlier surveys. Students who experience major-interest misalignment demonstrate lower knowledge domains and help-seeking behaviors compared to those satisfied with their choice (Diana et al., 2023).

According to Educational Psychologist Irene Guntur from the Integrity Development Flexibility (IDF), a significant 87% of university students in Indonesia are found to be experiencing the challenge of being in the wrong major. She also emphasized that being in the wrong major can lead to a decrease in students' motivation to learn. Supporting this data, another study also found about 50% of informatics engineering students are conveying feel unmatched by their major. In comparison, 62.5% of them perceive in feeling hopeless and desperation as the effect of choosing the wrong major (Primayasa et al., 2020). Furthermore, additional data collected through an initial survey of several Arabic education students from Indonesian universities indicates that 66% of these students believe they need to be in the right major, and 32% of them are facing difficulties in terms of their motivation to learn Arabic.

The wrong major experienced by students can indeed become an academic stressor, triggering a cascade of negative responses in a student's body, behavior, mind, and emotions. These reactions can have a significant impact on various aspects of a student's life, including academics, relationships, and psychological well-being. In academics, one of the primary challenges students face in the wrong major is a tendency to become pessimistic due to the loss of their educational goals, and the emergence of anxiety, particularly when learning the Arabic language. Therefore, it can be portrayed in student's behavior such as skipping class, repeating courses, low GPAs, lack of motivation, or having problems in understanding courses. If these negative impacts persist over time, they can lead to a decrease in learning motivation and result in a decline in the quality of learning outcomes.

Research demonstrates that choosing the wrong major creates significant academic stress and psychological challenges for students. Nearly 30% of students feel they have chosen an inappropriate major, with 87% reporting difficulties in major selection (Diana et al., 2023; Hasna, 2024). Students in mismatched majors experience lower academic satisfaction, difficulty understanding course material, and frequent stress or depression (Saputra et al., 2024). These students demonstrate lower knowledge domains and help-seeking behaviors compared to those in appropriate majors (Diana et al., 2023). The psychological impact includes poor social relationships, lack of parental support, and reduced self-efficacy, which impede effective coping strategies (Hasna, 2024). However, students do employ both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping mechanisms to manage stress, while building self-efficacy to persist in their programs (Rohmah, 2021). The research emphasizes the need for better academic counseling, guidance programs, and proactive knowledge-seeking from credible sources to help students make informed major selections and overcome academic difficulties (Saputra et al., 2024; Diana et al., 2023).

Based on the initial interviews conducted by researchers, it is apparent that students who find themselves in the wrong major exhibit two different reactions when facing this mismatched major problem. The first group tends to be pessimistic. Some of these students exhibit this behavior because they view their mistake in choosing a major as something challenging to rectify and nearly impossible to change. Consequently, some may opt to leave or change their major, while others choose to stay without significantly changing their approach. The second group tends to be more optimistic. Despite facing difficulties and experiencing academic stressors, these students see the wrong major as something that can be changed. They attempt to regain their enthusiasm and motivation for learning by changing or trying alternate learning strategies.

The study of language learning strategies became popular after the introduction of a well-designed questionnaire called the Strategy Inventory Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford in 1990. Oxford defines language learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning become faster, easier, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more adaptive." (Oxford, 1990) These strategies can be identified through observable behaviors that show how students process language acquisition. They can also be recognized through non-observable behaviors, which involve understanding what students feel during the learning process. O'Malley et al. (1985) describes language learning strategies as "techniques and devices used by second language learners for remembering and organizing samples of the second language. Strategies encompass the thoughts and behaviors used by learners to help them comprehend, learn, or retain information." Learning strategies may also include aspects of how students organize and control their behavior during the learning process. Researchers generally agree on the significant role of language learning strategies as facilitators in the successful learning process (Chamot, 1987; Cohen, 2014; Griffiths, 2004; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 2005). The usage of language learning strategies varies from one student to another, depending on their study aims, interests, and motivations.

The SILL questionnaire classifies language learning strategies into two categories: direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are strategies that directly involve the language acquisition process, includes memory strategies (for processing and memorizing language), cognitive strategies (for linking new information using mental processes), as well as compensation strategies (for overcoming gaps in language knowledge). In contrast, indirect strategies work on students indirectly in the language acquisition process. They are further divided into three categories: metacognitive strategies (focused on organizing and evaluating the learning process), affective strategies (for handling and controlling emotions or behaviors), and social strategies (for collaborating with others in the learning process) (Oxford, 1990; Gumartifa & Agustiani, 2020).

Previous studies primarily focused on language learning strategies among English and Arabic learners. Alfarys (2022) conducted a study that identified the language learning strategies used by English and Arabic learners, aiming to determine any differences or similarities between them. The research consistently indicates that metacognitive strategies are preferred by students in these contexts. Furthermore, research conducted by Vindayani (2019) explored language learning strategies used by Arabic students in general and found that the most commonly used strategies are metacognitive and social strategies. Another study by Wahdah and Andinia (2017) investigated the impact of student's backgrounds on the usage of language learning strategies among Arabic education students. This study revealed that student's backgrounds tend to influence them in making different choices regarding language learning strategies.

However, while there is extensive research on language learning strategies among Arabic and English students, there has been limited exploration of specific situations, such as the strategies used by students in the wrong major. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the language learning strategies used by these students who try to enhance their learning motivation.

This study aims to determine the language learning strategies employed by the wrong major students in the Arabic education department to enhance their motivation in learning Arabic. The results of this study may contribute to the identification of strategies used by the wrong major students in the Arabic education department.

2. METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach. Mixed methods involve data collection and analysis using quantitative and qualitative research methods to gain a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of the research problem. The primary objective of using mixed methods is to achieve a holistic understanding of the research topic (Creswell, 2014). In this study, a convergent parallel design was used as the research framework. A convergent parallel design was chosen as the research framework for this study. The convergent parallel mixed methods design involves the simultaneous and independent collection of quantitative and qualitative data, followed by the integration and comparison of findings during analysis to identify convergence, divergence, and mutual reinforcement (Adhikari & Timsina, 2024). This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of research problems by examining them from multiple perspectives and supports triangulation for cohesive analysis (Adhikari & Timsina, 2024; Labrador & Alderite, 2020). This design allows for the simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data, with both datasets being given equal priority. The rationale behind this choice is that combining numerical trends from quantitative data with nuanced, contextual insights from qualitative data enables researchers to explore the research problem from multiple perspectives. This integration is particularly valuable in studies involving complex phenomena like learning motivation and the "wrong major" issue, where numeric trends alone may not fully capture the depth of student experiences, and qualitative insights may benefit from statistical context. By concurrently collecting both types of data, this approach minimizes the time required for data collection and enables the triangulation of findings for enhanced validity and reliability (Johnson & Christensen, 2019).

In the first stage of this research, an initial survey in a questionnaire was conducted to observe and analyze the percentage of the wrong major students in Arabic education major in Indonesia, it is also to understand their

motivational problems in learning arabic. The initial survey has shown amount 66% of Arabic students in Indonesia experiencing the wrong major phenomenon, while 32% of them are aware of the lack of learning motivation they experienced. Subsequently, the questionnaire contains 50 statements adopted from the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Rebecca Oxford given to the respondents in order to determine what language learning strategies were used by the wrong major. At the same time, qualitative data was also obtained by doing interviews with two respondents aimed to get a deeper understanding of how the chosen language strategies help in enhancing the student's Arabic learning motivation. Furthermore, the collected data was analyzed concurrently using different methods according to quantitative and qualitative data analysis method. the result of each data was then interpreted to identify the connection and integration between the two data.

2.1 Subjects

The research involved 30 students with the wrong majors in the Arabic education department from three different universities in Malang. The study specifically focused on students currently enrolled and completing at least two semesters. This limitation of the sample selection was deliberate, as the researchers aimed to gather data from students with at least two semesters of experience. The assumption behind this choice was that students with more than two semesters of experience would likely possess greater self-awareness and a deeper understanding of the learning process, enabling them to provide comprehensive and valid information for this study.

2.2 Data Collection

Data for this research were collected using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were gathered through a questionnaire, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews. The interviews were designed to gain a deeper understanding of how the identified language learning strategies influenced students' motivation to learn Arabic. The selection of participants for the qualitative phase was based on their diverse experiences and varying levels of motivation, ensuring a richer understanding of the phenomenon. These interviews involved two Arabic education students from the University of Muhammadiyah Malang who identified as the wrong primary student. These two students were chosen because they were believed to be capable of providing in-depth and accurate information regarding their experiences as significant students.

As the quantitative instrument, the questionnaire consisting of 50 statements was organized and adapted based on the six language learning strategies mentioned by Rebecca Oxford in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The questionnaire utilized a Likert scale with five answer alternatives, namely, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The questionnaire was given to 30 students identified as the wrong primary students in Arabic education from three universities in Malang: the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University (known as UIN Malang), and the University of Islam Malang. These universities were chosen for several scientifically valid reasons. Pre-test survey data revealed that they had the highest percentage of students experiencing the wrong-major phenomenon among Arabic Education programs in Indonesia, makes them highly relevant for studying the phenomenon, as they offer a significant sample size and allow for a focused investigation of the issue. Furthermore,, Malang is a well-known educational center in Indonesia with many universities and students specializing in learning Arabic. Focusing on this region helps the research identify common trends while taking advantage of the area's unique features. As the researcher is familiar with these institutions, access to respondents and logistical feasibility were considered. This ensures efficient data collection and minimizes barriers such as communication challenges which are critical in conducting mixed-methods research. Quantitative and qualitative data collection co-occurred, with the questionnaire given to the sample during the interviews. However, although the data were collected simultaneously, they were analyzed at different times.

Table 1 – Learning Strategies Questionnaire Distribution

Strategies Group	Amount	Item Number
Memory	10	1-10
Cognitive	13	11-23
Compentation	6	24-29
Metacognitive	8	30-38
Affective	6	39-44
Social	5	45-50

2.3 Data Analysis

The collected data from the questionnaire undergo validity and reliability tests—the validity test aimed to assess the questionnaire's accuracy in measuring the intended construct. A validity test was performed using the Pearson product-moment correlation method by comparing the r-value with the r-table at a 5% significance level. As a result, 43 out of 50 items were deemed valid. However, the remaining 7 items were considered invalid; consequently, they were excluded and did not get involved in further data analyses (Sugiyono, 2015). Furthermore, the reliability test was conducted on the data to measure the consistency of the research instrument after being repeatedly used on the same subjects. The reliability test employed Croncbach's Alpha method, which is the decision criterion set by a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.70. the results of the reliability test revealed that 43 statement items demonstrated Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding 0.70, therefore the data was indicated reliable.

Afterward, the data subsequently were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Statistical analysis in this study aimed to provide an overview of the research findings in general, obtained through calculating the mean and percentage. Subsequently, the obtained percentage results are interpreted descriptively in sentence form. Qualitative data in this study were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. According to Miles & Huberman (1994), qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process until saturation is reached. The qualitative data analysis consists of four stages in order; data reduction, data display, then conclusions drawing or verification.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistic was obtained in this study to identify the language learning strategies utilized by the students. The questionnaire included six broad categories of language learning strategies adapted from Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Figure 1 illustrates the distribution and frequency of language learning strategies employed by the wrong major students.

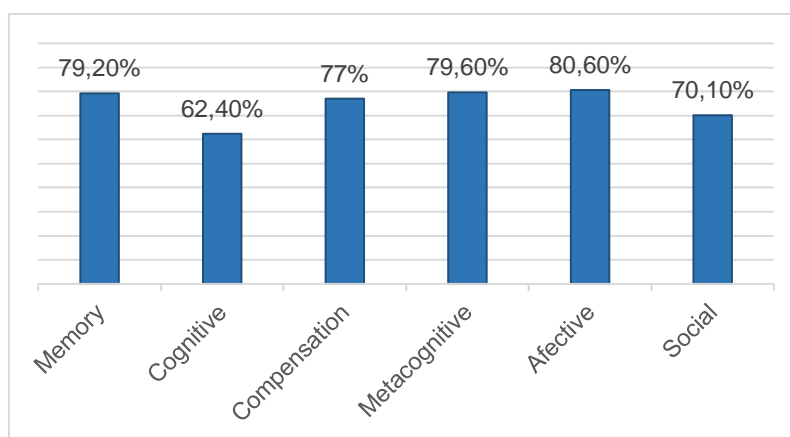


Fig. 1 – Learning Strategies Employed by Students

The percentage analysis of the questionnaire results highlights the preferences and tendencies of Arabic Education students in the wrong major regarding their use of language learning strategies. Among the six strategy categories, affective strategies emerged as the most favored, with a usage rate of 80.60%. This indicates that students in the wrong major rely heavily on emotional regulation and motivation-related techniques to cope with their learning challenges. For example, they may use self-encouragement techniques, handle stress related to learning, or find ways to maintain a positive attitude toward their studies despite the challenges of being in a major they do not feel suited for. Closely following affective strategies are metacognitive strategies (79.60%) and memory strategies (79.20%), indicating that these students prioritize planning, organizing, and reviewing their learning processes. These strategies may reflect an effort to create structure in their studies and actively recall information, which is essential for mastering a language like Arabic that involves significant memorization of vocabulary and grammar. It is also shown that students try to structure their learning process and monitor their progress, which helps them stay on track with their studies even when faced with difficulties.

Interestingly, compensation strategies are also used at a high level (77%). This implies that students frequently employ techniques such as guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words, using synonyms and antonyms, or applying context clues to understand or communicate effectively in Arabic. This helps them bridge gaps in their knowledge and maintain communication despite their perceived lack of proficiency. On the other hand, social strategies are used by 70.10% of the students. While moderately used, the lower percentage compared to other strategies that students may engage less often in cooperative learning activities, such as practicing with peers, engaging in group discussions or seeking help from instructors. This could be due to the discomfort or lack of confidence associated with being in a major they feel is unsuitable. Cognitive strategies, at 62.40%, are the least utilized. These strategies involve deep engagement with the learning material, such as analyzing, summarizing, and practicing new knowledge. The low usage of cognitive strategies indicates that students struggle with tasks requiring intensive focus and mental effort, due to a lack of interest or intrinsic motivation in the subject.

From this data, it can be concluded that students in the wrong major tend to rely more on strategies that help them cope with their learning challenges, such as affective, metacognitive, and memory strategies. However, they use fewer strategies that require active engagement with the material, like cognitive strategies, or collaboration with others, like social strategies. This pattern reflects their lack of intrinsic motivation and possible discomfort with their chosen field of study. Furthermore, the frequency of learning strategies usage can be observed through the mean results for each statement item, as presented in the following table:

Table 2 – Learning Strategies

Strategies Group	Item	Detailed Strategies	Mean
Affective	41	Self-appreciation	4,47
	42	Self-identification and self-understanding	4,27
Metacognitive	32	Observation and attention	4,27
	33	Seeking information related to Arabic language learning	4,30
Memory	9	Repetition	3,97
Compensation	29	Creating new words	3,53
Social	49	Practicing naturally	3,07
	50	Developing cultural understanding	3,53
Cognitive	16	Using external sources	3,47
	17	Practice and repetition	3,47

Based on Table 2, the most frequently used learning strategies are affective and metacognitive. The highest mean score of 4.47 for 'self-appreciation' (item 41) suggests that learners strongly value internal motivation and self-recognition to enhance their learning, reflecting a frequent reliance on strategies that boost emotional engagement. The metacognitive strategy 'seeking information related to Arabic language learning' (item 33), with a mean of 4.30, shows that learners actively seek additional resources to better understand the language, demonstrating a high frequency of use for strategies that involve autonomy and strategic thinking. The memory strategy 'repetition' (item 9), with a mean of 3.97, reflects frequent use, as repetition is crucial for long-term retention. Otherwise, strategies with lower mean scores are less favored. The compensation strategy 'creating new words' (item 29), with a mean of 3.53, is used moderately, suggesting that learners use this strategy less frequently, possibly due to its complexity. The cognitive strategies 'using external sources' and 'practice and repetition' (items 16 and 17), both with a mean of 3.47, show that learners do not rely heavily on external resources or independent practice, reflecting less frequent use of these strategies. The least used strategy, 'naturalistic practice' (item 49), with a mean of 3.07, demonstrates the lowest frequency of use, indicating that learners seldom engage in real-world language practice. Overall, the data reveals that learners prefer strategies focused on motivation and information-seeking, which are employed more frequently, while strategies requiring more independent or practical application, such as 'creating new words' and 'naturalistic practice,' are used less often.

According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies are actions, steps, and techniques used in the process of language learning. In the wrong major students, their motivation to learn Arabic is not in ideal condition due to the mismatch between their interests and their field of study which leads to the low motivation in learning Arabic (Purba, 2016). Consequently, various language learning strategies are employed to initiate change which is portrayed by student's learning behavior. Based on the questionnaire results, it was stated that affective strategies are the most commonly used strategies by the wrong major students. This finding is supported by statements made by respondents.

IAP: "After studying or taking an exam, I usually give some reward to myself, whether by going to the cinema, buying expensive food, or as simple as taking a walk."
 Similar sentiments were echoed by other respondents,
 FA: "I feel proud when I achieve something good. I'm proud because I've been studying before that, but that's all."

The behavior and actions exhibited by the respondents represent a form of affective learning strategy. Affective learning strategies are considered as indirect strategies that support the learning process without directly involving to the target language. The use of affective learning strategies focuses on mastering and regulating emotions, feelings, and meanings (Razak & Babikkoi, 2014). In this context, students employ affective strategies by taking control of their immediate environment, such as organizing their study space and cleaning their rooms. Another aspect of this strategy is rewarding themselves before, during, or after studying and being aware of the emotions they experience while studying, such as fear, anxiety, and boredom.

This findings contrasts with a previous study carried out by Vindayani (2019), which indicated the most frequently used strategies by typical Arabic education students are metacognitive and social strategies. The difference observed in the utilization of learning strategies can be attributed to the low motivation and psychological impacts experienced by students in the wrong major, including feelings of anxiety and fear of practicing arabic actively specifically in speaking whether they have an Arabic education background before or not, as seen by the statements below. Multiple studies provide robust evidence for this claim. Tria et al., (2024) found that psychological factors like language anxiety, motivation, self-efficacy, and self-confidence directly impact speaking abilities. Annida et al., (2023) specifically noted that students experience high anxiety levels, with 66% demonstrating heightened fear of negative evaluation. Hasan et al., (2024) further confirmed a statistically significant negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and learning strategy use, suggesting that increased anxiety directly reduces strategy effectiveness.

IAP: "When I saw that my classmates are mostly good even fluent in Arabic, that made me feel insecure and I was afraid to speak in Arabic because there might be a bad response from them"

FA: "Although I graduated from an Islamic boarding school where I had experience in learning Arabic, I am more afraid to speak it now, especially to those who are already fluent in it. I think I will make a lot of grammatical errors and miss using the harakats, thus I rarely speak Arabic unless it is needed".

In response to these challenges, these students tend to employ learning strategies that do not directly involve Arabic language acquisition, namely social or cognitive strategies. These strategies support learners by engaging in the learning activities such as speaking, practicing Arabic, listening, reading, and writing in Arabic. While direct strategies can significantly give impact and play an essential role in developing students' Arabic skills as portrayed in some previous studies (Fithriyah et al., 2019; Vindayani, 2019; Wahdah Andinia, 2017; Sari & Taufik, 2020, Indriati, et al, 2023;), the lack of motivation, low interest in learning Arabic, and the perception of a bleak future can create apprehension and anxiety among the wrong major students when it comes to activities that require direct and active interaction with the Arabic language. Consequently, these students tend to avoid direct strategies and instead focus on strategies that assist them in self-adjustment, emotional regulation, and self-reward. These tendencies are typically not observed in the non-wrong major Arabic education students where they have ideal and sufficient learning motivation.

Another effort made by students in the wrong major to enhance their motivation in learning Arabic is by arranging and planning, as indicated by the statements below,

FA: "I think I prefer to allocate my time to studying what I don't understand because for me it's not wasting my time. I mean if you study things, you already understand, it is such a waste of time like what is the point of it?"

A similar statement was also expressed by another respondent

IAP: "Usually, if I have free time especially on Sundays, I am planning myself to study topics that really bother me because I can't stop thinking about them since I don't understand them..."

Both of these statements represent the application of metacognitive learning strategies. The questionnaire results indicate that the use of metacognitive strategies is the second highest after affective strategies. Metacognitive learning strategies focus on coordination and management within the learning process (Vindayani, 2019). This finding supports previous research that mentioned the use of metacognitive strategies by Arabic education students in different backgrounds and proficiency levels (Wahdah Andinia, 2017).

In this case, students in the wrong major employ specific metacognitive strategies that revolve around planning and time management for their learning. They use these metacognitive learning strategies to schedule study time and gain a deeper understanding of challenging Arabic language materials. These efforts are aimed at addressing unclear aspects of Arabic language learning, with the goal of increasing their motivation and proficiency in Arabic.

Metacognitive strategies also fall under the category of indirect strategies, where the actions taken may not significantly impact Arabic language mastery but can boost motivation for learning. These strategies are closely related to the previously mentioned, affective strategies, as they both do not directly pertain to the language acquisition process but focus on creating a sense of security and comfort for students and awareness of their surroundings. For students in the wrong major, metacognitive strategies help them organize the learning process more systematically. These students tend to have low confidence in their Arabic language abilities, in active or passive even if they have prior Arabic language education background before. Therefore, they require a more systematic learning process to control and evaluate the extent of their learning. These strategies also aid in rekindling their goals and expectations in their learning journey.

Furthermore, the third most favored learning strategy is the memory strategy, with the most commonly chosen strategy being "repetition," as illustrated by the following statements:

IAP: "I try to remember vocabulary and sentences by taking notes on the material or vocabulary. So, I keep taking notes in class even if I don't understand it, and then I memorize it. If I'm in the mood, I'll repeat it".

FA: "Usually, I like to memorize vocabulary, especially when there's an exam or something, but if there is No. Test or any particular evaluation, I won't memorize."

Based on IAP's statement, the behavior represents the application of memory strategies in learning Arabic. Memory strategies aid learners in remembering and organizing vocabulary or new information. Subgroups within memory strategies include creating mental linkages (grouping specific words into a context), visual and auditory imagery (creating mental images or sounds with semantic associations), continuous reviewing, and using physical and mechanical techniques. According to the questionnaire results and the respondents' statements, the most commonly used form of memory learning strategy is the repetition or memorization of words heard or read.

Unlike the two most frequently used strategies mentioned earlier, memory strategies are considered as direct strategies that allow and assist learners in the direct process of language acquisition. Memory strategies involve interaction with Arabic language content, which is then stored in memory as new knowledge. For students in the wrong major, to enhance their vocabulary mastery, they choose to repeat what they hear, see, or read and also associate specific word sounds with particular contexts. However, in previous studies, memory strategies were not widely employed by Arabic language education students in general. This is because those with an interest in the Arabic language believe that practicing it orally and in writing is more effective and efficient than memorization.

Furthermore, according to the statements from IAP and FA, it becomes evident that their memorization is not solely driven by their internal factors aimed at sharpening their Arabic language skills. IAP's memorization depends on her mood during the learning process, while FA's memorization is not carried out continuously but rather depends on the urgency of the situation, such as upcoming examinations, tests, or specific conditions. This further illustrates that students in the wrong major lack of internal determination and willingness to learn Arabic, unlike the non-wrong major Arabic students. The involvement of emotions in their learning process also explains why wrong major students tend to favor affective and metacognitive strategies as these strategies offer comfort and maintain a sense of safety during their studies, focusing on helping students understand what they need and feel during studying also helping students to mitigate the anxiety and fear that often arise while learning Arabic in an environment where they feel misplaced or uninterested.

In addition, the findings also indicate the use of cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies allow students to directly interact with the Arabic language by comprehending meaning and producing language in various ways, such as using Arabic in daily life, repetition, understanding meaning, and analysis. In practice, cognitive strategies have a more specific scope that focuses on learning tasks, aiding students in manipulating the target language using cognitive processes, including analyzing language structure, receiving and conveying messages, and practicing. Cognitive strategies are well-suited to actively improving language proficiency, as they support the notion that language skills are acquired naturally through interaction with native speakers (Krashen, 1981). As statements given by the respondents below

IAP: " One of my favorite ways to study and learn Arabic is through watching movies or animation as it is interesting and fun to do, although it is fun I rarely do this because I don't think I remember much from it".

In the statement above, IAP mentioned that watching movies or animations is one of the activities she chose to learn Arabic. This is a popular adaptation of cognitive strategies where students use their mental processes to analyze the language structures and receive and make assumptions about the message. It indicates that using cognitive strategies directly contributes to the language acquisition process and allows students to practice.. A previous study conducted by Nesrine (2018) indicated that among successful English students, cognitive strategies were the most preferred strategies along with metacognitive strategies. Research on language learning strategies among successful English students reveals varying patterns of strategy preference. Purnama, et al. (2019) found that successful English students at University of Bengkulu primarily used metacognitive strategies (mean=3.94), followed by compensation (3.81) and cognitive strategies (3.59). The study also revealed that successful English students tend to choose cognitive strategy activities such as watching movies, listening to songs, and using mnemonics to enhance their English-speaking skills. This strategy allowed them to pay attention and practice the language actively. In contrast, students who chose the wrong major used cognitive strategies simply because they found it to be a fun activity, not realizing it failed to improve their Arabic language skills and ultimately led to boredom during learning. However, despite numerous studies highlighting the effectiveness of cognitive strategies for language learners (Atika, 2020), these strategies may not be suitable for students in the wrong major due to their inadequate motivation. In addition to their lack of motivation, cognitive learning strategies require considerable cognitive processes, analysis, and reasoning regarding language structure and sentences, making them challenging for students in the wrong major. Consequently, cognitive strategies are the least frequently used among students majoring in Arabic education who find themselves in the wrong major.

4. CONCLUSION

The study identified the types of learning strategies employed by students majorin in Arabic education specified in the wrong major students, and explored how these strategies influence their Arabic learning motivation. The findings revealed that these students tend to rely more on indirect learning strategies, such as affective, metacognitive, and memory strategies, Affective strategies are preferred within 'self-appreciation' and become the most used strategies among other affective. The second most utilized strategies involved activities like planning, attention allocation, and seeking relevant information. Metacognitive strategies helped students become more organized and systematic in their learning process. Lastly, Memory strategies were the third most frequently used. Though this strategy helped students actively engage with Arabic, its utilization only revolved around one specific activity namely 'repetition'. However, these strategies are influenced by emotional factors and student needs and were not carried out continuously. The students like to use the memory strategy when they feel in a good mood or under the pressure of urgencies.

Nevertheless, this study indicates that cognitive and social strategies are rarely employed and thus became the last favored strategy to use due to direct involvement in language engagement, which many students in the wrong major tend to avoid. The wrong major students did not prefer this strategy due to their lack of motivation and the fear of practicing language directly in daily life. However, despite the cognitive strategy being least used, some of the students still take advantage by applying this strategy through watching arabic animations or movies because they found it fun to watch and bring enjoyment to their learning process.

Based on the study, It is crucial for educators to recognize the emotional and motivational challenges faced by students who feel they are in the wrong major. Understanding that these students tend to gravitate toward affective and metacognitive strategies can help educators design more supportive learning environments. Encouraging self-regulation and emotional wellness, such as through positive reinforcement and structured learning goals, may enhance student motivation and reduce anxiety. Additionally, offering opportunities for low-pressure language practice could gradually help students become more comfortable with direct strategies like cognitive ones. While, students in this situation can benefit from developing more balanced strategies that combine

affective, metacognitive, and cognitive strategies. Focusing on emotional regulation and self-appreciation may provide the necessary foundation for tackling more direct strategies over time. Engaging in language practice in a stress-free environment, such as through watching Arabic media for enjoyment or participating in supportive peer activities, can also boost confidence and motivation.

5. REFERENCES

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