Web-based e-learning Application for learning Arabic language

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Abstract. In today's digital era, there are still many lecturers who conduct face-to-face meeting using the lecture strategy and using projectors and/or laptops as learning media. This educational model, although using multi-media, still has shortcomings because the interactions that occur during the educational process are limited on two-way interactions between lecturers and students. Learning tends to focus on the lecturer. In addition, learning faces obstacles when lecturers have to leave class because of other jobs outside the city or outside the island and even abroad. This traditional learning model also does not give students the opportunity to learn freely and independently. By considering this fact, the development of an ICT-based education system in a broader sense is urgently needed. It aims to overcome various problems and learning limitations. E-Learning system is an alternative solution to various problems. One of the e-Learning systems which based on computer technology is the use of website. The use of Website in the learning process provides opportunities for students to access learning material at any time and repeatedly so that the students can improve their mastery of learning material. Thus, the presence of lecturers is optional or even non-existent. This is because the parties who take on the role of lecturers are computers, electronic guides designed by content writers, e-Learning Designers, and computer programmers. This article offers website-based learning for Arabic language education study programs that can be used as a substitute for face-to-face learning (online learning).

Keyword: Web Base Learning, Arabic Language, Opportunity, Challenge

1. Introduction

Based on preliminary research, Arabic language education majors in various Education faculties at Religious Universities and Colleges in Indonesia are currently taking advantage of technology products although these technologies are still limited. There are still many lecturers who use traditional methods as well as face-to-face educational processes between lecturers and students. They commonly use projector media and off-line laptop programs as learning tools. Although such learning system is argued as a good system just because it uses multimedia, this system still has limitations and shortcomings because the interactions that occur during the learning process are limited to two directions between lecturers and students. In this system, the learning process still tends to focus on the lecturers (teacher-centered paradigm). Learning also requires lecturers and students to attend face-to-face meetings in class and then face obstacles when lecturers leave class because they work outside the city, outside the island, and even abroad. This kind of learning model is classified as traditional
because it does not provide wider opportunities for students to study independently and determine time choices freely.

In today's digital era, ICT is growing very rapidly. Technological developments have growth in various technological products and tools that can be used to break down barriers as well as support the success of education. It is being more valuable in case of an emergency situation which requires people to use technology to achieve their goals, such as the case today with the Covid 19 pandemic in various parts of the world. The use of ICT at this time is not only an option but as a necessity. One of the biggest impacts is on the world of education. All levels of education at various levels, both the lowest level and higher education institutions, simultaneously carry out e-Learning.

The problematic situation does not only happen in formal education sector only, but also in non-formal education. Many tutoring centers are closed in which it commonly gets many students in new academic year. Even the owners of those centers do not know when they can have normal situation and have new students. As an impact, many tutorials are conducted through online tutorial.

E-learning is a learning process which collects and shows the material through internet. The students can learn by computer wherever they are without a must to go to the school or classroom. E-learning is a kind of web-based learning which can be accessed from the web. In this case, learning application and materials that are developed are based on students’ need and it is then distributed through media. It is expected that the students can get an easiness through the media and can learn wherever they are. E-learning has many advantages, such as the students should not attend in the classroom. They can study wherever they want as long as they have internet access. It is also more flexible in terms of time and financial support.

Moreover, e-learning also facilitates the interaction between students and learning materials, students and teachers and students to students. Students can also share information to others and being easier to access the learning materials whenever and wherever repeatedly. In this situation, the students can improve their learning achievement. Besides, in e-learning, the lecturer must not present. It is because the role of the lecturer has been offered by the computer Not only the world of formal education, the world of non-formal education has also been affected by major changes, many tutoring centers are closed, where at the end of this education year, there should be a lot of tutoring participants with various interests, some will enter college, enter high school and others, because it is about to enter a new school year, and many of these tutoring centers are closed temporarily and some do not even know when it will be reopened. Finally the lessons are held at home via online or following the government program to learn via television.

E-Learning is the learning process of collecting and displaying educational material on the internet. Students can study via their local computer without having to physically go to class. E-Learning is often understood as a form of web-based education or a website that can be accessed internally or from the web. In this case, learning applications and materials are developed as needed and distributed through the media, and students then get the convenience of these media and can learn in wherever they are. E-Learning has many advantages and strengths, including students do not need to sit in class to listen to everything the lecturer tells them face to face, learning can be done anywhere, as long as there is an internet network. E-Learning can also shorten the target schedule for teaching, and can save costs that must be borne by study programs or educational institutions, as well as student transportation costs.[1]

In addition, e-Learning facilitates interaction between students and material, between students and lecturers, and between students and fellow students. Students can also share information with others and access learning materials whenever and wherever they are, and can access it frequently and repeatedly. In this situation, students can improve their mastery of learning material. In e-Learning, lecturers can automatically attend, or even don't need to be present. This is because those who take on the role of lecturers are computers and electronic guides designed by content creators, e-Learning designers and computer programmers.

Besides, e-learning also offer many others advantages. It can help teachers to facilitate the learning more freely. Mohammadi, Ghorbani and Hamidi state that e-learning can increase students’ motivation
o learn while it can also give a lot of space for the learner in terms of place, time and style in learning. They also argue that e-learning may give a comprehensive learning because e-learning provides all instructional sources and tools that can help learners learn optimally. [2]

As a part of e-learning development, the website is one of the most developed web technologies for a long time and is most often used in the implementation of distance education and training (e-Learning). This site is defined as a collection of pages that display various text information, data, still images, moving images, moving data, audio, video, or a combination of these, whether static or dynamic, forming a series of interconnected buildings, each connected to a network irradiation pages or links.

There are three types of sites, namely static websites, dynamic websites, and interactive websites. Dynamic sites are sites whose structural updates are regularly updated by the website manager or owner, which is made in the form of html or plain Html, usually this type of website does not require server side rendering such as php, java, or nodejs. Dynamic Website is a type of website written using server side programming languages such as Php, Java, Nodejs and Ruby and so on. This type of website is called dynamic because the content or data displayed can be changed as desired directly or real-time, in contrast to static websites that must be changed manually and interactive sites, namely two-way communication between the web owner and the web visitors themselves. So in the web it allows readers to interact with the author or with other readers.[3]

The world of education has also changed. The teaching and learning process is carried out online or E-learning. Study anywhere and anytime through the network is also known as online. In fact, this is not something new.Online learning has been applied since 1970 (Waller and Wilson 2001).[4] However, it was just not like today. Learning is still an asynchronous system (indirect). Unlike the case today, this is more synchronous system (direct). The functions performed today are also different from the past. E-learning which has three functions: as a supplement (addition), as a complement (complement) and as a substitute (substitute). Today e-learning serves as a substitute because other options cannot be implemented.[5]

Through the application of e-Learning in education, students and lecturers can get many benefits. Lecturers can place teaching materials and homework that students have to do in a certain place on the site to be accessed. E-Learning also has a high degree of flexibility and can be developed. It means that students can access learning material repeatedly at any time, and students can also communicate with lecturers at any time. In this situation, students can improve their mastery of educational material.

Through e-Learning activities, lecturers receive several benefits (Soekartawi, 2002a, b) in which they can: (1) update learning materials and make it easier and in accordance with the requirements of modern scientific development, (2) develop themselves or carry out scientific research in order to increase their horizons due to their relatively free time, and (3) control students' learning activities effectively, even be able to know when they studied, how long they were taught, how often certain topics have been re-learned, (4) check whether students have worked exercises or homework after studying a certain topic, and (5) observing students' answers and evaluating them.

E-Learning according to Bates (1995) and Wulf (1996) has four benefits. First, it increases the level of learning interaction between students and lecturers. If e-Learning is carefully designed and made, it can increase the level of learning interaction between students and lecturers, students and colleagues, and between students and learning materials. This is very different from traditional learning. Not all students in traditional juxtaposition activities can be brave or confident. They have the opportunity to ask questions or express their opinions in discussions. Second, there is the possibility of educational interactions from anywhere, anytime (flexibility of time and space). Third, it has broad access to students. Space and time are not obstacles. Interaction with learning resources can be done via the internet. Learning opportunities are open to anyone who needs them. Fourth, it facilitates storage of learning material and easily updates it. In addition, improvements can also be made to the way the learning material is delivered based on feedback from students, or based on the results of the evaluation of the lecturer as the person responsible for the learning material.
In the current Covid 19 pandemic situation, lecturers as educators are indirectly challenged to be able to find effective learning methods without eliminating face-to-face processes. Thus, one solution that can be applied is to apply an E-learning learning system. This article aims to review the use of e-learning, especially the use of websites, as a solution in implementing online learning in language learning, especially Arabic learning.[6]

2. Methodology
This research uses descriptive analysis with a literature study approach

3. Result and Discussion
a. Website in learning Arabic language
The use of technology is one of the ways to improve students' abilities.[6] For today's era, modern media education cannot be imagined without digital technologies. Thus, it can be stated that the role of E-learning is highly important. Moreover, technologies are mediators between students and lecturers. Febriani and Anasruddin stated that “ICTs can enhance the quality of education in several ways: by increasing learner motivation and engagement by facilitating the acquisition of basic skills, and by enhancing teacher training. ICTs are also transformational tools which, when used appropriately, can promote the shift to a learner-centered environment.[7] To learn a language like Arabic via using multimedia technologies, students should prepare themselves through self-directed and use new strategies. By using technologies and web, students can improve their communicative competencies, familiarize with various cultures and strengthen their language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Besides, using web-based and internet learning, students’ anxiety can be reduced and responses are transferred quickly and students get more confident. In order to get those advantages of e-learning, the teachers should be able to integrate internet with their instructional materials and teaching styles in order to create a meaningful learning environment. Thus, the students can get autonomous by using e-learning[2]

The importance of learning Arabic through the web is because it is more flexible, time and space can be adjusted and can be accessed at any time. Arabic as the second language and is the world language at the sixth rank at the United Nations is not difficult to access and learn. Many websites for language learning Arabic, these websites provide many benefits for Arabic lovers everywhere. Among the most users are:

b. Arabic-online.net/ Arab language via internet.
The founder of this web is Prof. Dr. Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Musa, Director of the Saudi electronic University, this is a milestone and a different turning point in the history of Arabic language teaching and learning, and will lead to a new style and culture launched by the Saudi electronic University as an Arabic language service.[8] The program has a vision of "spreading Arabic around the world" and has a mission to "provide a distinct education for Arabic for non-native speakers, achieving the latest international standards and best practices in language learning and teaching through an online curriculum that helps spread Arabic around the world."
To achieve the mission and objectives of the program, Arabic language learning is provided in a comprehensive and integrated format, with 16 levels of study programs, and learning elements consist of grammar, composition, writing, reading, training, vocabulary and listening videos. The program includes 796 interactive main videos, 6,320 media images, 12,000 audio files and 10,076 instructional trainings.

One of the facilities of this program is the availability of options for language skill level (16 levels) for visitors who wish to study. In addition, a language test (placement test). This test consists of a placement test, a classification test and a standardized test.

To popularize this program in Indonesia, a cooperation agreement has been signed between the Saudi Electronic University and a number of universities in Indonesia. To participate in this program, visitors must register their name and personal information on the registration page.

c. Learning.aljazera.net/Web of Arabic Learning

This site indulges visitors with facilities to practice using and improving Arabic by providing interactive learning activities. This site is a service that allows visitors to ask any question they are looking for on any Arabic language problem, and provides the right answer.[9]

One of the facilities of this site is that students are ready for the choice of language skills they want to learn and match their language skills, besides that students are biased to choose an instructor, as shown in the image of the following page.
Figure 3. The al jazira website features a selection of instructors

d. Voiceofarabic.net/ Shotul Arabiyah

This site was created by Dr. Abdul Hamid bin Muhamm ad al Hamid, Arabic grammar expert at the Arabic language faculty of the Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University of Islam in Riyadh. The purpose of establishing this web is, to overcome the difficulties of learning Arabic and to be devoted to Arabic. be the voice of Arabic voices who solve their problems freely, and open opportunities for others to share their opinions, in order to contribute to spreading and promoting this great language and instilling pride in the souls of children to endeavor to publish and raise Arabic language.[10]

Figure 4. Arabicofovoice.net

This site is based on several topics as written in one of its main pages, Every Arabic lover feels his struggle is still less than it should be, This site comes with an effort to reduce some of the duties of each specialist in Arabic with its flaws, but do little better than nothing. once, and
this site is inseparable from the phases of weakness and deficiency. This site addresses issues related to learning for Arabs and others, to introduce learning, to simplify problems, and to move to apply as much information as possible from Arabic, language and literature and research as well as scientific books.

The three sites above are among the sites on learning Arabic, and are accessible to anyone who wants to learn Arabic in an efficient and measurable manner. However, behind the advantages above, there are many challenges in facing e-learning, whether they are web-based or not. According to Al-Hujran, Aloudat, and Al-Hennawi, there are several points that can be challenges for students and even teachers during the use of e-learning. They claim that those challenges are [11]:

a. Students have lack of awareness about the usefulness of e-learning. The students although the students are aware that e-learning may give a more efficient points in terms of time and place, but some students still think that learning is not an optimum learning when the teachers do not stand in front of the class. This lack of awareness is surely being a challenge for the teachers to direct the students’ mindset in which learning is not only receiving knowledge from the teachers, but also from many other sources.

b. Unclear understanding of the students about what e-learning is. Whenever the students get confused of what e-learning and how to use it, the students will not try optimally achieve the learning goals since they have an opinion that e-learning is just a supplementary of their learning aspects. The results of this study reveal some of obstacles and challenges of learning Arabic online both in terms of lecturers and students as stated as follow:

c. Resistance to use e-learning from the lecturer. It is one of the big challenges which is found on the teacher’s side. Mostly the teachers who have been experienced in teaching have a tendency to teach by using traditional method. It has been seemed as their culture to teach the students traditionally. In this pandemic situation just like now, the teachers are suddenly directed to change their teaching methods into using e-learning. This dramatic change commonly faces a resistance from the teacher.

d. No continuous availability of the e-learning website. The availability, accessibility, and reliability of e-learning system have been found as a significant effect on the level of satisfaction of such systems in some institution. Truthfully, the fact found in Indonesia shows that not all the institutions are provided by huge quality of access for e-learning. It automatically challenges the government, the institutions, and the teachers itself to conduct a learning process through e-learning. It cannot be denied that accessibility and availability of e-learning website is a must for e-learning system.

For Indonesia context, the obstacles faced by students are almost the same in all campuses and regions of Indonesia, because during this pandemic some students returned to their respective hometowns, which are hills, forests, gardens and there is no electricity and internet. Students face several challenges such as; (1) the assignment given by the lecturer, because all learning methods are online, the lecturer who teaches often gives assignments to the students. Some lecturers think that the absence of face-to-face classes creates time for each student, therefore it is not uncommon for teaching lecturers to provide materials and assignments to fill the gap during self-quarantine. (2) The tasks given are constantly making stressed students do not have free time to rest and their immunity decreases if they experience excessive stress. The fact is that what is happening now is not online or online lectures, but online assignments. (3) Disturbances on the internet network. Apart from the many assignments given by the teaching lecturers, there are also problems with the material being presented which sometimes cannot be understood. Currently, due to the limited time provided on the video conference platform, the lecturer shortened the material provided; the opportunity to ask questions was very limited because the time had also been set.[12]

Internet networks from different providers are also one of the obstacles to studying online at this time. The material exposure given by lecturers is often cut off due to unstable internet networks. [11] The quota or data package used, because the lecture system has turned online, the unfortunate fate of students whose homes do not have Wi-Fi is that they have to spend more to buy quotas or data
packages. In conducting online lectures using a video conference platform, it is certain that it consumes a lot of quota or data packages from previous usage.

Based on some students’ experience, online lectures can take up about 1 gigabyte for each one hour course. If within one week there are 7 courses that must be done online, then the quota or data package required reaches 3 to 4 times the usual usage.

In dealing with these complaints, in Indonesia especially, several universities, such as state universities, have provided free quotas or data packages for students who need them. The student organization at college also helped in distributing questionnaires for students’ data collection that needed in running online courses.

4. Conclusion

Using ICT offers many advantages for students. There are many sites that can be used for independent learning. Those sites were created in order to give easiness for learning Arabic language. Learning Arabic language is not difficult as long as the students can get comprehensive materials which can be gotten from the sites discussed above. These website facilitate students and materials, students and lecturer and students to students. Besides, students can also share information among them whenever and wherever they are repeatedly.

Website has an important role in spreading and learning Arabic language. It is expected that those who care about Arabic can learn Arabic from official websites, good and free, despite the obstacles from various sides.

The challenges and obstacles faced by various campuses both in Sumatra and Java are basically the same; they have advantages and disadvantages for each region. The biggest difficulty arises from students who will study that are caused by students and teachers’ perception about learning by using e-learning, network limitations, economic limitations and limited IT equipment. It can be concluded that for smoothing learning process, all difficulties can be resolved by various parties.

For Arabic learners, in particular, there are many sites that can be used for free and the sites are also complete. The students only need to increase learning motivation. They need to remember that e-learning is not a supplement but an option that must be implemented by all parties; lecturers, students and institutions.

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