



The Implementation of the Mahārah al-Kitābah Method in Maharoh Kitabah Learning Reviewed From a Constructivist Perspective At The Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Abraar.

Desi Hariyanti Harahap¹, Danial Hilmi², Arpin Aminuddin Harahap³
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim
desyharahap3214@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of the Imlā' method in learning Arabic writing skills (maharah al-kitābah) at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School and analyze its suitability from a constructivist perspective. The research approach employed is a descriptive qualitative method, utilizing data collection techniques that include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation of santri writing results. The results show that the Imlā' method is applied systematically through the stages of mastering grammatical concepts, structured dictation exercises, and insyā' writing. This learning process involves the active role of the teacher as a facilitator who provides guidance (scaffolding) and correction on an ongoing basis, enabling students to build independence in thinking and writing. From the viewpoint of constructivism, the Imlā' method reflects contextual and reflective learning, where knowledge is actively constructed through direct experience and social interaction. Documentation of writing results shows significant progress in spelling accuracy, sentence structure, and understanding of nahwu-sharaf rules. The findings demonstrate that the Imlā' method is not only effective in enhancing technical writing skills but also aligns with meaningful learning approaches that engage learners as active participants in the learning process.

Keywords: Mahārah al-Kitābah; Constructivisme; Perspective.

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Introduction

Learning writing skills (maharah kitabah) in Arabic is an important aspect that not only supports vocabulary and sentence structure mastery but also serves as a foundation for students to understand Islamic texts more deeply.¹ In the context of learning in modern Islamic boarding schools, writing skills are increasingly viewed as a competency that every student must possess to meet future academic and professional challenges.² One method that is still widely used is the imla' method, which is writing practice through the dictation of texts read by the teacher gradually and systematically. This method emphasizes mastery of the rules of writing Hijaiyah letters, spelling accuracy, and the habit of listening and taking careful notes.³ However, the implementation of maharah kitabah learning in practice has not always been optimal, especially in connecting linguistic theory mastery with actual writing skills.

Based on initial interviews with one of the Arabic teachers at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School, it was found that around 60% of students at the school still have difficulty writing Arabic sentences correctly and appropriately in accordance with the rules of nahwu and sharaf. The teacher explained that although the students have received intensive theoretical instruction in grammar through classroom activities and regular lessons, their ability to apply this theory to practical writing remains relatively low. "The children can answer grammar questions correctly, either orally or in writing," he said, "but when asked to construct sentences in the insya' form, many of them are confused and make basic mistakes." This phenomenon shows a gap between the students' mastery of concepts and their practical writing skills. He also added that the curriculum at modern Islamic boarding schools such as Al-Abraar now increasingly requires students to not only understand the contents of classical Islamic texts, but also to be able to write productively, both in the form of scientific papers and other academic notes. Therefore, according to him, a more contextual and applied learning approach is needed, one that is not only focused on memorizing theories but also emphasizes hands-on experience and systematic writing practice.

¹ Nabilla Antrisa Putri, Warsiman Warsiman, and Titik Hermiati, "Peningkatan Keterampilan Menulis Teks Eksposisi Melalui Model Problem Based Learning Dengan Media Gambar," *Jurnal Metamorfosa* 10, no. 1 (2022): 11–21, <https://doi.org/10.46244/metamorfosa.v10i1.1730>.

² Firdaus Atmajaya, Anggit Husniati, and Aisyahrani Arifin, "Optimalisasi Kefasihan Pelafalan Kosa Kata Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Menulis Santri Pondok Pesantren Islamic Center Limbangan," *Tsaqofiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 6, no. 1 (2024): 279–94, <https://doi.org/10.21154/tsaqofiya.v6i1.393>.

³ Rahmi Aisyah, "Kemampuan Menulis Bahasa Arab Dengan Metode Imla ' Siswa Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Mu ' Awanah," *Journal Of Social Science Research* 3 (2023): 1.

Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School is known as an Islamic educational institution that not only emphasizes the understanding of classical Islamic texts and Islamic values but also focuses on strengthening active Arabic language skills, particularly in writing proficiency (*maharah al-kitābah*). One of the prominent methods in the writing learning process is the *Imlā'* method, which combines dictation with the practice of *insyā'* writing. At this boarding school, *Imlā'*'s activities are not conducted haphazardly but through systematic and structured stages. The process begins with the gradual introduction of Arabic language rules, such as sentence structure, word forms, and proper placement of diacritical marks. Once the students have mastered these foundational concepts, they are consistently trained through daily *Imlā'* exercises, which are then developed into independent *insyā'* text writing.

This activity is carried out under the direct supervision of teachers. Also, it serves as an evaluation to determine the extent of the students' understanding of the material that has been taught. One Arabic teacher emphasized the importance of this method in shaping the students' language skills. He said, "We do not immediately encourage children to write freely. We start with *Imlā'*, so that they become accustomed to the correct form and structure of Arabic writing. After that, they will be more confident in writing in their own style." This learning process not only trains technical writing skills but also builds discipline, precision, and sensitivity among the students toward the rules of the Arabic language.

With this consistent approach, the *Imlā'* method at Al-Abraar Islamic Boarding School has proven to have a positive impact on improving the quality of students' writing, in terms of writing style, spelling, and sentence structure. Students who were initially passive and rigid in their writing gradually showed improvement in paragraph construction, the use of appropriate vocabulary, and the logical expression of ideas. This serves as evidence that the *Imlā'* method, when applied contextually and consistently, can be an effective tool in teaching writing skills within the context of a modern Islamic boarding school.

One of the main reasons for implementing the *Imlā'* method at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School is the strong desire of the school to produce graduates who excel in Arabic writing skills. This ability is considered an urgent need, given that students are not only required to understand Islamic texts but also to be able to express their ideas and thoughts in well-written Arabic. This situation is further reinforced by the students' relatively strong foundational grasp of Arabic grammar, which serves as a solid foundation for more practical writing instruction.

In this context, the Imlā' method was chosen because it has an effective and structured approach, starting from dictation exercises, contextual understanding of rules, and regular practice of *insyā'* writing. As explained by Bu Nyai Sari, an Arabic language teacher at Al-Abraar, "We observe that writing skills are not sufficient with theoretical understanding alone; they must be cultivated from an early age so that students can think and write using proper Arabic language patterns." Thus, the implementation of the Imlā' method at this boarding school is not merely technical but also strategic, aimed at equipping students with academic readiness and competitiveness as they pursue higher education, both domestically and internationally.

The improvement in the writing skills of students at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School has shown positive results, especially after the implementation of the Imlā' method in writing lessons. Over the course of several months, the students have successfully produced a number of Arabic-language written works that demonstrate a good command of language structure and a solid understanding of grammatical rules. The Imlā' method used has its own unique characteristics, where each teacher is first provided with intensive training by language experts and professional writers who have produced written works relevant to educational needs.

The skills and experience of these resource persons are then internalized into the teaching process, so that students are not only taught technical writing, but also gain direct experience on how to start the writing process systematically. Learning is not merely theoretical, but begins with an in-depth study of grammatical rules and concepts, accompanied by examples and regular practical exercises in accordance with the principles of the Imlā' method.

Although the results appear positive and promising, a fundamental question arises: to what extent is the Imlā' method truly capable of comprehensively developing the writing skills of students? Is this method sufficiently effective in building students' confidence and creativity in expressing their ideas in written form? These questions form the basis for the need for further research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Imlā' method in writing instruction within modern Islamic boarding schools such as Al-Abraar.

The Imlā' or dictation method is one of the traditional approaches that is still relevant and widely used in writing instruction at Islamic boarding schools, particularly in improving the accuracy of Arabic writing. Rosmawati et al. (2025) state that in practice, the IMLA method not only trains motor skills in writing but also instills precision in listening, understanding, and copying words with correct spelling. Therefore, the implementation of the Imlā' method

must adhere to clear writing standards, such as the proper use of Arabic letters, the correct placement of diacritical marks, and an understanding of the grammatical rules (nahwu and sharaf) that underpin the structure of words and sentences.

The IMLA method is also a form of writing activity that emphasizes students' ability to write words or sentences read aloud by the teacher accurately and neatly. Imla' aims to train students' skills in writing Arabic letters well, involving the sense of hearing to listen to the reading, and testing students' understanding in distinguishing elements of writing, such as the length of the reading, tasydid, alif lam ta'rif, and tanwin. In its implementation, the imla' technique is divided into four categories: copying (imla' manqul), observing (al-imla' al-manzhuur), listening (al-imla' al-istima'i), and testing (al-imla' al-ikhtibaari).

The application of the dictation method in learning requires students to have a thorough understanding of the concepts and rules, and their application as a starting point for writing. The implementation of the Imlā' method in Arabic writing instruction is no longer merely an option, but rather an urgent necessity that must be addressed. Writing is not just about expressing ideas, but also requires a deep understanding of language rules, both in terms of concept and practice. The Imlā' method, which emphasizes writing training through dictation, plays an important role in shaping students' accuracy and skills in writing Arabic letters and words correctly. Cahyaningsih and Fuad (2021) emphasize that the application of this method is crucial in helping students understand the concept of Arabic writing comprehensively, as it balances theory with direct practice. Thus, Imlā' not only trains writing motor skills but also strengthens understanding of language structure, which is a crucial foundation for writing skills.

The IMLA method has several important objectives, including providing practice in writing letters and sentences correctly, training the five senses, especially the ears and hands, accustoming students to listen carefully, expanding their vocabulary, and building regular and thorough study habits.⁴

Constructivism is a learning theory that places learners as active subjects in the learning process. According to this view, knowledge is not something that is transferred directly from teacher to student, but rather constructed through experience, interaction, and individual reflection on their environment. In the context of Arabic language learning, constructivism provides a strong philosophical and methodological foundation, whereby learners do not

⁴ PUTRI HARDIYANTI, "Analisis Metode Pembelajaran Imla' Pada Smp-It Perguruan Islam Daarul Muwahhidin Kab. Tanah Datar," *Al-Lisān Al-'arabi-Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 2 (2022): 17-27.

simply receive material, but actively construct their own knowledge based on learning experiences they have had and are currently undergoing. Meanwhile, Vygotsky (1978), in Alharbi's writing, emphasizes the importance of scaffolding or teacher assistance in developing higher cognitive skills. Thus, the *imla'* method can be seen as a constructivist learning medium that combines independent writing practice with intensive teacher guidance, so that students' skills develop gradually and continuously.

Previous studies have shown the effectiveness of the constructivist approach in writing instruction. Basir and Rusydi (2021) emphasize that constructivist-based Arabic language learning encourages students to actively construct knowledge through experience and reflection, with teachers acting as facilitators. This is in line with the *Imlā'* method applied in modern Islamic boarding schools, where students are trained to write based on an understanding of language structure in context. Meanwhile, research by Waruwu (2022) shows that the use of the constructivist approach with the M3 technique (observing, imitating, modifying) significantly improves students' ability to write speeches, as students are directly involved in an active and meaningful learning process. Both studies support the notion that the constructivist approach can serve as a strong foundation for writing instruction, including in the context of the *Imlā'* method in Islamic boarding schools. This study specifically focuses on the following questions: (1) How is the *imla'* method implemented in *maharah kitabah* learning at Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School? (2) How is the constructivist perspective reflected in the process of applying this method?

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for exploring learning phenomena in depth, particularly the implementation of the *Imlā'* method in teaching *maharah al-kitābah* at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School. Qualitative research allows researchers to understand the meaning, process, and dynamics of learning from the perspective of the participants directly, as well as to describe the relationship between the *Imlā'* method and the principles of constructivism in Arabic language learning. The subjects in this study were Arabic teachers and senior high school students who were actively involved in writing lessons at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School. The location of the study was chosen purposively because this boarding school consistently applies the *Imlā'* method as its main strategy in Arabic writing lessons.

Data collection was conducted using three main techniques, namely: In-depth interviews, conducted in a semi-structured manner with teachers and several students to ascertain their

views on the implementation of the Imlā' method, the challenges faced, and its impact on writing skills. Participatory observation: conducted during the learning process to directly observe how the Imlā' method is applied, including the stages, teacher-student interactions, and student responses. Documentation: includes students' written work, teaching materials, evaluation sheets, and teachers' notes during the learning activities.

Data Analysis Techniques: The collected data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by filtering important information according to the research focus. The reduced data were presented in the form of thematic narratives to facilitate the drawing of meaning. Subsequently, conclusions were drawn reflecting the patterns of Imlā's method implementation and its alignment with constructivist principles.

Data Validity Testing: To maintain the validity and reliability of the data, this study uses source and technique triangulation. Triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure that the findings are reliable and reflect the reality in the field.

Result and Discussion

Based on the results of interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of learning documentation, it was found that the application of the Imlā' method in teaching maharah al-kitābah at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School was systematic and continuous. Teachers begin the lesson by reinforcing the basic rules of nahwu and sharaf, then integrate them into regular Imlā' exercises. Field findings show that students do not just mechanically copy texts, but are gradually trained to understand sentence structure, the accuracy of harakat, and the correct use of word forms. The correction process carried out by teachers directly and repeatedly is an important part of learning, as it helps students recognize mistakes, reflect on them, and correct their writing in the next exercise. Documentation of students' writing results shows significant improvement, especially in terms of the neatness of sentence structure, consistency in applying nahwu-sharaf rules, and the ability to distinguish between word types and sentence patterns. These findings indicate that the Imlā' method not only functions as a writing exercise but also as a meaningful learning tool that encourages active student engagement, builds writing independence, and strengthens their conceptual understanding of the Arabic language.

Implementation Of The Imlā' Method In Learning Mahārah Al-Kitābah

The Imla' method is a method where the teacher recites the lesson material, and the students are asked to write it down in their notebooks. Imla' is also done by the teacher writing the lesson material on the blackboard, then erasing it, and then asking the students to write it down again in their notebooks. Meanwhile, maharoh kitabah or writing skills are the highest of the four language skills. Writing is also an activity that is related to the thinking process and the skill of expression in written form. Writing is also said to be a very complex activity because it requires the ability to arrange and organize ideas logically, as well as the ability to present writing in a variety of written languages and writing rules that also vary.

The interview session revealed that the Imlā' method has been systematically applied in the teaching of maharah al-kitābah at the Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School. The implementation process begins with the gradual teaching of Arabic grammar rules, such as sentence structure, word forms, and harakat placement. Once the basic concepts are deemed sufficiently mastered, the students are directed to participate in regular Imlā' exercises, which are then developed into insyā' (free writing) exercises based on relevant topics.

The use of this method is not only focused on motor skills in writing but also emphasizes spelling accuracy, understanding of nahwu and sharaf, and a deeper understanding of sentence structure. Teachers play an active role as facilitators who guide and supervise each stage of implementation, including providing corrections for mistakes made by students. This demonstrates a guided practice approach to learning that encourages students to build their writing independence gradually.

This learning approach reflects the main principles of constructivist theory, in which learners are positioned as active subjects in constructing their own knowledge through direct experience and interaction with the learning environment. The Imlā' method, which combines understanding of conceptual rules with gradual writing practice, provides a reflective and exploratory learning space. In this context, teachers are no longer the sole source of information but function as facilitators who provide scaffolding or support tailored to the cognitive development level of learners. This concept aligns with Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which refers to the gap between what a student can do independently and what they can achieve with assistance from others.⁵

Furthermore, the constructivist theory developed by Jean Piaget also provides a strong theoretical basis for understanding how santri build their writing skills. According to Piaget,

⁵ Alfira Andraini and Warsiman, "Peningkatkan Kemampuan Menulis Teks Eksposisi Melalui Implementasi Teori Konstruktivisme Piaget Pada Siswa Kelas X-A SMA," *Jiip (Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan)* 7 (2024): 2192–99.

the learning process occurs through two main mechanisms, namely assimilation and accommodation. In learning to write through the Imlā' method, students assimilate when they associate new knowledge (e.g., nahwu and sharaf rules) with their existing cognitive schemas. Accommodation occurs when students have to adjust their thinking structures because they find errors or inconsistencies in the writing process, such as when they misplace harakat or form sentence structures incorrectly. This change indicates cognitive development that is not only mechanical but also conceptual.

According to Piaget, students who are in the formal operational stage (around 12 years of age and above) are capable of abstract and logical thinking. Therefore, the Imlā' method, which is based on strengthening grammar and structural reasoning in writing, is highly appropriate to apply, as it aligns with their cognitive development. Students not only learn to write technically but are also encouraged to understand and construct sentence structures based on linguistic logic, which is a concrete manifestation of formal thinking.

Thus, the application of the Imlā' method at Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School is not only effective from a pedagogical perspective but also has a strong psychological basis, as theorized by Piaget. The learning process allows students to form meaning, organize knowledge independently, and experience intellectual development through real experiences and continuous practice.

The documentation analyzed during the study showed significant development in the writing skills of the students, both technically and conceptually. The results of the students' writing, which were collected periodically, showed improvements in sentence structure, consistency in the use of nahwu-sharaf rules, and the ability to distinguish between verb forms, types of nouns, and logical sentence structure. The structured teacher correction process is also an important part of the learning process, as it provides direct and in-depth feedback on the students' mistakes. These findings indicate that the learning of maharah al-kitābah through the Imlā' method is not only instructional but has become a scaffolded learning process based on real-world experience.

From Vygotsky's theoretical perspective, the process of correction, discussion, and reflection in Imlā' exercises is a concrete form of scaffolding, where the teacher acts as a companion in the students' zone of proximal development. Through the teacher's temporary yet directed assistance, students can complete writing tasks that were initially beyond their capabilities and gradually build independence in thinking and writing. The learning process that occurs

in such a social context is strongly emphasized by Vygotsky, where interpersonal interaction is the key to the development of higher cognitive functions.⁶

Meanwhile, from Jean Piaget's perspective, the documentation results also show that santri have activated two important processes in their cognitive development, namely assimilation and accommodation. When students receive new grammatical material or writing patterns, they assimilate it by linking the information to their existing mental structures. However, when they encounter corrections or errors in their writing, they must accommodate new knowledge by changing their old thinking patterns. This process reflects meaningful learning, in which understanding develops not through memorization but through direct experience and the need to correct mistakes independently.

Furthermore, the habit of writing through daily or weekly Imlā requires the active involvement of students in every stage of learning. This aligns with the foundational principle of constructivism, which states that effective learning is learning that enables students to construct their own knowledge based on their interactions with their environment and experiences. In this context, the Imlā' method not only strengthens language skills but also fosters systematic, logical, and reflective thinking habits in Arabic—a skill that serves as a crucial foundation in the context of modern pesantren education.

Theoretical Discussion: Constructivist Perspectives in the Learning Process

Findings from the implementation of the Mahārah al-Kitābah method at Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School show that writing skills (maharah al-kitābah) are taught within a constructivist approach. Theoretically, constructivism views knowledge as being actively constructed by learners through experience, social interaction, and reflection on what they have learned.⁷ In this context, the Imlā' method not only provides writing exercises but also serves as a means of constructing complete and contextual language meanings.

Referring to Jean Piaget's theory, the learning process occurs through two main mechanisms, namely the reception of information and the child's adjustment to new understanding. Students at Al-Abraar appear to be receiving information when they connect new grammatical knowledge (e.g., the use of pronouns or verbs) with their existing knowledge. When students identify errors in their writing and correct them after receiving feedback from

⁶ Muhammad Tareh Aziz, laili mas ulliyah Hasan, and Muhammad Rido'i, "Analisis Kurikulum Bahasa Arab Berbasis 4C (Critical Thinking , Communication , Collaboration , Creativity) Untuk Pengembangan Kompetensi Abad 21 Pada Siswa" 2, no. 1 (2024): 216–22.

⁷ Rosidah, Nur, and Faedurrohman, "Penerapan Maharoh Kitabah Dalam d Alam Pembelajaran Baha Bahasa Arab Melalui Metode Tode Diskusi Dan Latihan Di SMP Islam Mathooli ' Ul Anwar Lampung Tengah."

their teacher, they are adjusting to a new understanding, specifically aligning their thinking structures with the correct rules of language. This process is in line with the formal operational stage of cognitive development, which, according to Piaget, is achieved when individuals can think abstractly, logically, and systematically, a skill that is essential in learning to write Arabic.

The basic principles of constructivism, such as active learning, contextual learning, meaning formation, and direct experience, are all reflected in writing instruction through the Imlā' method. Students are not positioned as passive recipients of knowledge, but rather as active participants who construct their understanding through practice, mistakes, discussion, and revision of their writing. Teachers act as facilitators, providing students with the space to build their own concepts based on their learning experiences and the guidance they receive. This aligns with the modern constructivist perspective that meaningful learning cannot be separated from the active involvement of learners in the process.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Imlā' method is not only effective in the technical aspects of learning to write but also firmly rooted in the theoretical approach of constructivism that places learners at the center of learning, encourages independent thinking, and fosters language awareness gradually and continuously.

Conclusion

The implementation of the Mahārah al-Kitābah method in learning Mahārah al-Kitābah at Al-Abraar Modern Islamic Boarding School is carried out systematically through the stages of grammatical understanding, routine dictation exercises, and insyā' writing. This process combines conceptual learning with directed writing practice under the guidance of the teacher. From a constructivist perspective, the Imlā' method has created an active, contextual, and reflective learning space, where students build their understanding of Arabic through direct experience, discussion, correction, and revision. The documentation results show a significant improvement in the students' writing skills, both in terms of the technical side of writing proper Arabic letters and mastering logical sentence structures. Thus, the Imlā' method is proven to be effective not only in pedagogical aspects but also relevant to the constructivist approach that emphasizes meaningful learning and independent thinking.

This study still offers room for further development, and future researchers are encouraged to expand the focus to aspects of writing creativity, the effectiveness of technology-based Imlā', and comparative analyses between the Imlā' method and other instructional strategies used in modern Islamic boarding schools. The development of more comprehensive

assessment instruments is also essential so that students' writing abilities can be mapped more thoroughly, including error analysis and the influence of affective factors on writing performance. Follow-up studies are expected to enrich empirical findings and offer stronger theoretical contributions to the study of *maharah al-kitābah* from a constructivist perspective.

Pedagogical Implications The pedagogical implications of these findings indicate that the *Mahārah al-Kitābah* method should no longer be understood merely as a mechanical writing exercise, but rather as a learning strategy that integrates grammatical understanding, higher-order thinking skills, and writing practice in a holistic manner. The staged implementation of *Imlā'*, beginning with the reinforcement of *nahwu* and *sharaf*, followed by routine dictation exercises, and culminating in the development of *insyā'*, provides students with opportunities to build writing competence through direct experience. This implies that Arabic language teachers need to design *kitābah* instruction that is more structured, continuous, and process-oriented, rather than focusing solely on the final written product.

Implications for the Teacher's Role. From the perspective of the teacher's role, these findings reinforce the importance of positioning teachers as facilitators and providers of scaffolding in the learning of *maharah al-kitābah*. The processes of correction, error discussion, and joint reflection embedded in the *Imlā'* method have proven effective in helping students understand their mistakes conceptually. This implication requires teachers to possess strong pedagogical competence, particularly in delivering constructive feedback that aligns with students' cognitive developmental stages. Consequently, writing instruction becomes a dialogic process that fosters independent thinking and heightened linguistic awareness, rather than a one-way transmission of knowledge.

Institutional Implications At the institutional level, the findings suggest that modern Islamic boarding schools need to place greater emphasis on strengthening writing skills as a core component of students' academic competence. The *Imlā'* method, which aligns with a constructivist approach, can serve as a relevant instructional model for *kitābah* learning in contemporary *pesantren* contexts. Moreover, this study opens opportunities for the development of more innovative Arabic language learning policies, including the integration of the *Imlā'* method with educational technology and the development of more comprehensive assessment instruments to map students' writing abilities in greater depth.

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