



Patterns and Factors of Arabic Writing Errors: A Descriptive Study in Learning through the Imlā' Mandzūr Method

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This study aims to describe in depth the patterns of errors in Arabic writing and the factors causing these errors in the use of the *imla'* mandzur method in class VIII 2 at Al-Falah Islamic Junior High School in Jambi. This study is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of Arabic language teachers and eighth grade students. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that there were five patterns of writing errors made by students, namely errors in connecting letters, errors in writing *hamzah qath'*, errors in reducing letters, errors in writing similar-sounding *Hijaiyyah* letters, and errors in writing *harakat*. The factors causing these errors include diverse educational backgrounds, lack of practice in writing Arabic, and concentration factors, namely lack of focus during learning. The implications of this study indicate that the application of the *imla' mandzur* method needs to be accompanied by intensive practice and guidance so that students are able to write letters or spellings in Arabic according to the correct writing rules, as well as providing input for teachers to improve the effectiveness of Arabic writing instruction in schools. This research also contributes to improving students' accuracy and motivation in Arabic writing.

Keywords: Errors Analysis; Imla' Mandzur; Writing Arabic

Abstract

مستخلص

البحث

Keywords

كلمات

أساسية

INTRODUCTION (مقدمة)

Language is the primary means of communication for humans, whether spoken, written, or sign language. The need to learn foreign languages has become inevitable with the rapid development of civilization and intercultural interaction. Mastery of foreign languages not only serves as a means of communication but also as a means of understanding science and culture. Therefore, Arabic is a language that plays a very important role in the Islamic world, especially because it is the language of the Qur'an, hadith, and various other religious literature (Yuliarti et.al, 2025). Arabic has been taught at various levels of education, ranging from Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), *madrasah*, integrated Islamic schools, to public schools.

Based on the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 183 of 2019 concerning the Curriculum for Islamic Religious Education and Arabic Language in *Madrasah*, Arabic language learning is directed toward mastering the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the most important skills to learn (Putri & Taufik, 2024). Among these skills, writing is considered the most complex as it requires logical thinking and proper application of linguistic rules, such as the use of *harakat*, *nahwu* (grammar structure), and *shorof* (morphology) (Rathomi, 2020). Meanwhile, according to Muradi, writing skills are language skills used to convey ideas and thoughts in written form (Muradi, 2016). In Arabic language learning, this complexity increases due to the script system that differs from Indonesian, such as the variation in letter shapes depending on their position within a word. Arabic writing also appears to be homographic (Harianto et.al, 2025). Writing can also serve as an effective evaluation tool to measure students' understanding of the learning material (Febriani & Massofia, 2024).

This condition indicates the need for effective and innovative learning strategies so that students can write correctly (Baroroh & Rahmawati, 2020). Several methods can train students' accuracy in writing *huruf hijaiyyah* according to the sounds they hear or the texts they observe, such as *imla' manqul*, *imla' mandzur*, *imla' al-istim'i*, and *imla' al-iktibari* (Hermawan, 2013). One relevant *imla'* teaching method for the secondary education level is *imla' mandzur*, in which students observe and study a text from a book or blackboard. Afterward, the text is covered or students are asked to turn away from the board, and the teacher dictates the same text for students to rewrite (Munjiah, 2012). This process requires students to focus, be meticulous, and recall the written form and structure of the words they have learned. Thus, the *imla' mandzur* method involves coordination between visual, auditory, and memory functions simultaneously, as it trains concentration and writing accuracy.

In reality, students' ability to write in Arabic is still relatively low, particularly in terms of letter form accuracy and word structure. Field observations show that students of SMP Islam Al-Falah Jambi still face various difficulties in Arabic writing. These difficulties include errors in separating letters that should be connected. The differences between connected and isolated Arabic letters are one of the main factors contributing to writing difficulties. Such errors indicate weak mastery of the writing rules regarding which letters can or cannot be connected (Nuramaliah et.al., 2021). Therefore, a systematic error analysis is needed to comprehensively understand the mistakes made by students. This can also be used to correct writing errors and improve writing skills by studying examples of Arabic writing errors (Wijaya & Kholifah, 2023). This analysis includes data collection, error identification, error description, error classification, and

evaluation (Tarigan & Tarigan, 2021). Through error analysis, it is possible to identify the weakest aspects of writing skills and design more effective learning strategies.

Previous relevant studies show that errors in Arabic writing remain frequent. Wahyu (2024) identified eleven types of spelling errors based on *imla'* rules and their causal factors. Meanwhile, Aisyah et.al., (2023) found that Junior High School (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah*) students often make mistakes in writing *alif lam* and *ta' marbutah*. Similarly, 'Ula et.al., (2023) demonstrated that the *imla' mandzur* method can improve writing skills, although their study did not analyze linguistic writing errors. In addition, the research by Insaniyah & Nur Kumala (2022) discussed writing errors in *imla'* learning tests and identified the causes, namely lack of writing habits and weak mastery of *nahwu*. This indicates that there has been no study specifically linking writing error analysis to the use of the *imla' mandzur* method at the secondary level.

This study aims to analyze in depth the patterns of Arabic writing errors made by eighth-grade students of Al-Falah Islamic Junior High School in Jambi the use of the *imla' mandzur* method, as well as the factors that cause these errors. Therefore, this research is essential as a basis for improving methods and strategies in Arabic language learning, particularly in writing skills.

METHOD (طريقة \ منهج البحث)

The research method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. The qualitative approach aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of Arabic writing errors in the implementation of the *imla' mandzur* method among eighth-grade students of SMP Islam Al-Falah Jambi. This study emphasizes direct observation of the Arabic learning process as well as analysis of students' written work to identify the types and

causal factors of writing errors. The subjects of the study consist of the Arabic language teacher and the eighth-grade students (Class VIII 2), while the object of the study is the errors in Arabic writing through the application of the *imla' mandzur* method.

The research was conducted in the school environment, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument, supported by tools such as a mobile phone for audio and visual documentation, observation sheets, and interview guidelines.

The research procedure includes three stages: pre-research, implementation, and final stage. Data collection techniques involve observation, interviews, and documentation. Meanwhile, data analysis follows the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The validity of the data is ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking to confirm the credibility of the research findings.

The results of the analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the patterns of Arabic writing errors and the factors influencing them in the application of the *imla' mandzur* method.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION (بحث ومناقشة)

First, errors in separating letters. Mistakes in separating *huruf hijaiyyah* occur when learners write Arabic letters without paying attention to their position whether at the beginning, middle, or end of a word resulting in incorrect joining according to Arabic orthographic rules. An example of this error appears in the writing صَغِيْرَةٌ

أُسْرَةٌ, which should correctly be أُسْرَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ. The error occurs because the student separates the letter *ya* (ي) from the following *ra* (ر), which should remain connected.

Some students do not understand that *huruf hijaiyyah* can connect to preceding or following letters except for six letters: (ا، د، ذ، ر، ز، و). For example, students fail to connect *ya* and *ra* in the middle of a word, although both can be joined according to Arabic rules. This indicates difficulty in understanding letter forms based on position. Arabic writing itself starts from right to left, and one letter has several forms when placed at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a word (Mustofa & Arsita, 2023). As Insaniyah & Nur Kumala (2022) noted, such errors occur due to limited knowledge of which letters can and cannot be joined. In *imla' mandzur*, visual-memory skills for letter forms are not yet fully developed, showing weak mastery of basic Arabic writing. Teachers should therefore provide guided writing exercises and use visual-audio media to reinforce students' understanding of letter forms in various positions.

Second, errors in writing *hamzah qath'i*. These errors occur when students omit the special sign that indicates a *hamzah qath'i* (ء). Although the symbol should be used specifically to represent the presence of *hamzah qath'i*, students often fail to do so. This can be seen in words such as أُسْرَةٌ, أَبُّ, and أُسْرَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ, where the *hamzah qath'i* at the beginning of the word is omitted. The correct forms are أُسْرَةٌ, أَبُّ, and أُسْرَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ. Similarly, in لَكَ أَبُّ, the student omits the *hamzah* in the middle of the word; the correct form should be لَكَ أَبُّ.

Many students still misunderstand the importance of *hamzah* in Arabic orthography, often assuming it unnecessary to write *hamzah* above *alif*. This reflects weak mastery of basic writing rules, particularly in distinguishing between *hamzah qath'i* and *hamzah washl*. In line with Nuramaliah et al., (2021), these errors frequently occur due to limited understanding of orthographic principles. Targeted exercises and media that emphasize *hamzah* position and function should therefore be included in *imla' mandzur* lessons to strengthen student comprehension.

Third, omission of letters. In Arabic writing, omissions frequently occur due to weak mastery of grammar both *nahwu* and *shorof* as well as inaccuracy during writing. For instance, in أَمَّ , the *ya mutakallim* at the end of the word is omitted, whereas the correct form is أُمِّي . Another example لَه , is missing an *alif* (ا) or *madd* after *ha* (ه) to indicate a long vowel; the correct form should be لَهَا . In $\text{أُسْرَةَ صَغِيرَةً}$, the *ya* (ي) after *ghain* (غ) is omitted, so the correct form is $\text{أُسْرَةَ صَغِيرَةً}$. Similarly, أُسْرَةَ should be أُسْرَتِي , as the student omits the *ya* (ي) as *dhamir muttasil* and replaces *ta' ta'nits* (ت) with *ta' marbutah* (ة).

These errors occur because students have not yet understood the rules for writing long vowels (*madd*) such as *alif*, *wawu*, and *ya'*. The inability to distinguish between short and long sounds demonstrates weak visual and phonological skills. As Insaniyah & Nur Kumala (2022) also explain, omissions often stem from students' lack of awareness of letter functions and phonetic distinctions. Thus, special training in writing *madd* and differentiating vowel lengths is essential in *imla' mandzur* instruction.

Fourth, errors in writing letters with similar sounds. Mistakes in *huruf hijaiyyah* that have similar pronunciation occur when students confuse letters that sound almost identical, leading to the use of incorrect letters. For instance, أَمُّ should be عَمُّ , where ‘ain (ع) is incorrectly replaced by *alif hamzah* (أ). In the word عُمِّي , which should be written with a *hamzah* (أ) at the beginning of the word, the student mistakenly replaced it with the letter ‘ain (ع). The correct spelling should be أُمِّي . Another error appears in the word أُسْرَةَ , which should be written as أُسْرَتِي . In this case, the student omitted the letter *ya* (ي), which serves as a attached pronoun (*dhamir muttasil*), and replaced the *ta’ nits* (ت) with a *ta’ marbuthah* (ة)

These occur when students confuse similar-sounding letters for example, substituting one for another indicating poor mastery of *makharijul huruf* and *imla’* rules. As Wahyu (2024) also explain, notes that such mistakes arise from phonetic similarities between letters. Therefore, Arabic writing instruction should not only emphasize visual recognition but also include listening and pronunciation drills to help learners distinguish phonetically similar letters accurately.

Fifth, errors in *harakat* writing. These occur when learners incorrectly place or use diacritical marks such as *fathah*, *kasrah*, *dhammah*, *sukun*, *tasydid*, or *tanwin*. For example, أَبِّ incorrectly places *tasydid* on *alif* (ا) without *hamzah*; it should be أَبِّ . The word جَدُّ should be جَدُّ , as the *tasydid* on (د) is missing. In أُمِّي , *alif* is incorrectly given

tasydid and *fathah*, and *ya* receives *fathah* and *tasydid*; the correct form should be **أَيُّ**,

with *hamzah* carrying *dhammah* and *ya* having *sukun*.

These errors are found in the use of *tasydid*, the substitution of *dhammah* with *fathah*, as well as the incorrect application of *sukun* and *tanwin*. This is consistent with the opinion of Nuramaliah et al., (2021), who indicated that students lack understanding of the correct rules for writing *harakat* and demonstrate low accuracy in distinguishing their forms. Therefore, these findings reflect insufficient mastery of orthographic conventions and emphasize the importance of consistent *imla'* practice to reduce *harakat* or orthographic errors in Arabic writing. Teachers should therefore reinforce *imla'* exercises focusing on *harakat* writing, especially at the end of words, and provide immediate correction to students' written work.

Factors Causing Writing Errors

Linguistically, every language has two different sides, namely difficulty and ease (Patmalia, 2021). In terms of Arabic language learning, writing errors made by students are often influenced by various factors.

First, educational background. The educational background of students has a significant contribution to their Arabic writing skills. Students who come from public schools have not received systematic Arabic language instruction, unlike students who come from madrasas or religious-based institutions that have made Arabic a subject taught. This has an impact on differences in learning readiness, especially in mastering the Hijaiyyah alphabet and writing rules.

This finding is in line with the opinion of Firdausiyah & Jannah (2025), who stated that educational background affects students' level of Arabic language

knowledge. In the *imla'* *mandzur* method, educational background determines its effectiveness. This method requires the ability to listen, recognize sound patterns, and write them back accurately, which can only be achieved if students have a strong phonetic and orthographic foundation.

Second, lack of practice. The study showed that the low frequency of writing practice is one of the main factors causing errors in using the *imla'* *mandzur* method. Most students write Arabic only during class without continuing practice at home, resulting in undeveloped motor and visual skills related to letter shapes and diacritical marks. This finding is consistent with the study of 'Ula et al., (2023), which stated that a lack of writing practice affects students' performance in learning Arabic through the *imla'* *mandzur* method.

Theoretically, this phenomenon can be explained through behaviorist theory, which emphasizes habit formation through repetition and reinforcement. In Arabic learning, repeated practice functions as a stimulus that strengthens the response in the form of correct writing skills until it becomes habitual. Without sufficient practice, proper writing habits are not established, and errors frequently occur.

Third, Concentration Factor. Concentration factor in learning is important in Arabic writing skills. Some students admitted that they had difficulty focusing when listening to the teacher's dictation in *imla'* lessons. This condition caused writing errors in both form and harakat placement. This study is in line with the opinion of Annisah et.al., (2024), who stated that writing requires high concentration because without sufficient focus, the writing can be irregular, incoherent, and incomplete. High concentration enables students to write correctly, thereby minimizing errors.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that Arabic writing errors reflect fundamental difficulties in understanding letter forms, the use of diacritical marks, and writing conventions. These results highlight the importance of structured *imla' mandzur* practice to strengthen students' visual, phonological, and concentration skills. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the need for a more integrative approach to Arabic writing instruction to enhance students' accuracy and fluency in writing consistently and effectively.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the ability to write in Arabic through the *imla' mandzur* method still encounters several significant challenges, particularly in students' understanding of Arabic writing conventions, the correct use of *harakat*, and overall writing accuracy. The research identified five main patterns of writing errors: errors in connecting letters, incorrect writing of *hamzah qath'i*, omission of letters, confusion in writing phonetically similar *Hijaiyyah* letters, and misplacement of *harakat*. These errors are primarily influenced by students' diverse educational backgrounds, insufficient practice in Arabic writing, and lack of focus during learning activities.

The findings of this research contribute to the advancement of Arabic writing pedagogy by emphasizing the importance of structured and consistent application of the *imla' mandzur* method. To improve writing proficiency, it is essential to integrate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning aspects in the implementation of *imla'* exercises. This integration is expected to enhance students' concentration, engagement, and mastery of Arabic orthography.

The limitation of this study lies in its relatively narrow scope, which only involves one class in a single school. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a

broader sample and investigate the long-term effectiveness of the *imla' mandzur* method across different educational contexts.

Overall, this study provides a clear scientific justification for the role of the *imla' mandzur* method in strengthening Arabic writing skills. It also offers practical implications for Arabic language teachers to design learning activities that prioritize guided practice, interactive media use, and attention management. Consequently, the results of this study not only enrich the understanding of Arabic writing errors but also contribute to the development of more effective instructional strategies in the field of Arabic language education.

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