

The Application of the 5E Inquiry Model in Teaching and Learning Arabic Literature: An Observation Study at Sultan Idris Education University

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ABSTRACT

The 5E inquiry model is an effective pedagogical framework designed to enhance skills through experiential inquiry learning and constructive knowledge construction. This study aims to examine the application of the 5E model in teaching and learning (T&L) of Arabic Literature at a Public Higher Education Institution (IPTA). Adopting a qualitative approach, the study utilized structured observation as the primary data collection technique involving three lecturers teaching Arabic literature courses. The observation data were analyzed to evaluate the extent to which the implementation of the 5E model encompasses the elements of Engagement, Exploration, Explanation, Elaboration and Evaluation across various student-centered teaching activities. Observational findings show that the application of the 5E inquiry model in Arabic literature instruction effectively fosters two-way communication, independent material exploration, focused supplementary explanations, conceptual development and contextualized learning assessment at university. Consequently, the implications of this study indicate that the 5E inquiry model holds significant potential in empowering the instruction of Arabic literature at the higher education university level.

Keywords: 5e inquiry model, Arabic literature, qualitative observation, higher education

INTRODUCTION

Arabic literature is a core component of Arabic language teaching and learning at the Public Higher Education Institution (IPTA) level. The literary component encompasses the understanding and mastery of cultural appreciation alongside aesthetic values in literary texts such as poetry, prose, classical works. According to Samah, et al. (2023), literature is an essential and effective element in the language acquisition process. Furthermore, they explained that integrating literature with foreign language proficiency, cultural awareness, creative and critical thinking and motivation. Similarly, Abdul Majid and Abdul Ghani (2024) stated that mastering of the Arabic language offers distinct advantages in the fields of religion, linguistics, communication and education.

Despite its importance, critical problems arise in the teaching of Arabic language and literature. Ali Aldebsi and Eldosoky (2023) highlighted that traditional outdated teaching methods persist in contemporary classrooms. Additionally, according to Isa et al. (2024) stated that Arabic language educators face significant challenges in planning and implementing lessons that incorporate elements of Arabic culture such as syllabus requirements, cultural backgrounds and ethnicity. Most current instruction remains teacher-centered and overly reliant on passive lecture methods, which creates an unattractive environment and restricts student involvement. Consequently, student participation becomes passive, thereby limiting their mastery of basic Arabic language skills and causing of disruption during teaching and learning sessions (Nugraha et al., 2024). Meanwhile, at the higher education level, a study by Abdul Rahman et al. (2018) demonstrated that the mastery level of higher education students in Arabic literature such as *Balaghah* is at a low and moderate level. They

also observed the higher education institutions face constraints regarding limited time and space to complete the set extensive syllabus. In this regard, students' weaknesses in mastering the Arabic language become highly evident at the university level (Samah, 2022). This is also due to the lack of diversification in teaching techniques, including the integration of technology as an instructional tool, which stands as a primary challenge in learning Arabic literature (H. Osman et al., 2022).

The phenomenon of Arabic literature education in the 21st century urges educational practitioners to reform in their pedagogical strategies and techniques. Kamaruddin and Tahir (2022) suggested that inquiry-based teaching and learning offers invaluable opportunities for students construct their own comprehension through practical exploratory activities. This is supported by Rahman and Abd Halim (2024), who emphasized that an inquiry approach encourages active student involvement and promotes autonomous self-learning. Consequently, the 5E inquiry model served as a strategic framework and methodologic to address existing problems in Arabic language and literature instruction. This specific pedagogical model is deliberately designed to build knowledge and self-understanding via active student self-investigation (Yonyubon, et. al, 2022; Mosin and Christine, 2024). In addition, Hadry et al. (2024) emphasized that the implementing innovative instructional models is highly critical and effective in meeting contemporary student needs while aligning strongly constructivist principles. Therefore, Nugraha et al. (2024) affirmed that the implementation of this 5E model significantly enhances student academic achievement and ensures long-term knowledge retention compared to conventional teacher-centered approaches.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Therefore, this article aims to investigate the application of the 5E inquiry model in the teaching and learning of Arabic Literature based on observation data at a public university. The objective of this study is to examine the implementation of inquiry-based teaching using the 5E model in the teaching of Arabic Literature at UPSI.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Arabic word for literature is “*Adab*” which signifies a “well-developed, polite, cultured, indicating politeness, sophistication and enrichment (Al-Tamimi, 2012). In this study, Arabic literature compasses courses such as *al-Adab al-‘Arabiyy*, *Dirasat Fi al-Nusus al-Adabiyyah*, *Balaghah al-‘Arabiyyah*.

Inquiry-based teaching and learning represent one of the contemporary pedagogical method utilized to enhance instructional quality for both educators and students. Furthermore, the Arabic language syllabus places greater emphasis on language skills, language communication and sentence construction rather than merely mastering the comprehension of studied passages (Samah et al. 2023).

The 5E model categorizes activities and instructional methods that foster student engagement and active practice of constructivist approach. This framework assists students in developing their potential in assess their abilities and understanding (Yonyubon et al., 2022). Similarly, Ismail (2023) asserts that the constructivist approach serves as one of the most practical models in applying learning theory.

Samah et al. (2023) stated that utilizing literary materials in education help students comprehend academic content specially prose and poetry. This is supported by Safian et al. (2022), who note that literary studies extend beyond poetry alone, despite literature being broadly categorized into prose and poetry. Furthermore, H. Osman et al. (2022) stated the most significant impact of using technology applications in learning Arabic literature is the accessibility to read and study materials anywhere. In a related study on language teaching strategies, Samah et al. (2022) identify three approach: collection strategies (such as consulting teachers and referencing dictionaries), reinforcement strategies (including interaction and translation) and application strategies (comprising speaking, listening, reading and writing activities).

According to Mosin and Christine (2024) state that the implementation of the 5E inquiry model encourages students to search for materials collaboratively in groups and independently through student-centered activities. Consequently, this approach prevents students from become easily disengaged, enhances their comprehension and retention and fosters both creativity and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). In addition, according to

Yonyubon et al. (2022) found that executing a learning management plan using the 5E model exerts a positive effect on student knowledge. Similarly, Yonan et al. (2022) showed that the 5E learning cycle provides opportunities for students to illustrate their understanding to construct new experiences. Furthermore, a study by Tarawneh (2024) indicated that this 5E is not exclusive to the social sciences, but language education can also leverage this 5E model to design activities that improve, motivate and promote active engagement among students. However, existing literature primarily focuses on Arabic language acquisition or broad Arabic literature rather than examining literary texts as the core components that requires deeper analytical critique.

Although several studies have reported the utilization of the 5E Model in the teaching of science, language, grammar or student engagement, most existing primarily focused on the school level using quantitative and quasi-experimental designs. Consequently, investigations exploring the qualitative application of the 5E Model in the teaching of Arabic language or literature education particularly at the higher education level remain severely limited. Therefore, this study aims to describe in detail the application of the 5E Model in the teaching and learning of Arabic literature at a Malaysian public university.

This study contributes significantly to the field of Arabic literature education by providing a comprehensive overview of the application of the 5E inquiry model's application at the higher education level. It offers valuable exposure to the framework's implementation which can be used as a reference for lecturers in planning and executing structured, interactive and student-centered teaching and learning strategies. In addition, this study shows evidence in the form of actual observation data in the context of teaching Arabic literature. Ultimately, these insights can enhance the quality of teaching and support educators in implementing instructional teaching and learning that aligns with inquiry-based pedagogy at public university.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using an observational survey design. To gather empirical data regarding to the application of the 5E inquiry model, the researcher utilized non-participant observation for data collection. The observation method one of the best techniques for observing an activity, event or situational contexts in real time directly (B. Merriam, 2022).

The participants were selected utilizing a purposive sampling approach. This procedure enabled the researcher to determine certain characteristics of the selected study participants and to provide information that was appropriate for the study being conducted (Lebar, 2009). An initial screening was conducted by verifying the field and academic expertise in Arabic literature via Expert@UPSI portal. Consequently, three lecturers from Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI) who actively teach Arabic literature courses were selected. To fulfill the research scope, structured observation was employed. This observation instrument underwent a rigorous validity and reliability process through expert review before conducting the observation to ensure that the instrument and checklist comprehensively addresses the research questions.

Observational findings were analyzed thematically through by identifying instructional activities patterns recorded via the checklist instrument. The identified codes were then grouped into subthemes according to 5E inquiry model: Engagement, Exploration, Explanation, Elaboration and Evaluation. Observation data was analyzed using the manual thematic analysis method by Braun and Clarke (2012). The gathered data were repeatedly examined to distinct teaching practice patterns. Next, initial coding patterns were constructed and grouped into smaller subthemes based on each element of the 5e inquiry model to describe the comprehensive description of how inquiry-based teaching is operationally implemented.

The observations and data collection process were mutually agreed upon by the participants and a schedule observation was established. The observation process was conducted across specific Arabic literature course namely *al-Adab al-'Arabiyy*, *Dirasat Fi al-Nusus al-Adabiyyah*, *Balaghah al-'Arabiyyah* during the second semester of the 2024/2025 (A242) which taught by three distinct lecturers (referred to as Lecturer A, B and C) specializing in the field of Arabic literature. Each observation session lasted between one and three hours aligning with the institutional timetable. The detailed observation calendar, structured according to the availability of the participants is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Teaching and learning observation calendar for Arabic literature course

Code	Participants	Course	Inquiry Element
P1	A	<i>al-Adab al-‘Arabiyy</i>	Engagement
P8	A	<i>al-Adab al-‘Arabiyy</i>	Engagement, Exploration, Explanation
P9	C, A	<i>Balaghah al-‘Arabiyyah, al-Adab al-‘Arabiyy</i>	Exploration, Elaboration
P12	B	<i>Dirasat Fi al-Nusus al-Adabiyyah</i>	Explanation
P13	C	<i>Balaghah al-‘Arabiyyah</i>	Evaluation
P15	A	<i>al-Adab al-‘Arabiyy</i>	Evaluation
P16	B	<i>Dirasat Fi al-Nusus al-Adabiyyah</i>	Elaboration
P17	C	<i>Balaghah al-‘Arabiyyah</i>	Explanation
P23	A	<i>al-Adab al-‘Arabiyy</i>	Evaluation

RESULTS

Based on the empirical findings, the gathered data demonstrate the systematic application of the 5E inquiry model across various teaching and learning sessions. In the engagement phase, active implementation is reflected through two-way communication and interactive question and answer sessions using instructional tools and prior knowledge activation. The exploration phase involves student engaging in inquiry tasks using diverse reading materials, digital sources. Next, the explanation phase incorporates supplemental explanations by the lecturers to clarify concepts and expand student understanding using instructional tools. Furthermore, the elaboration phase, focuses on broadening conceptual understanding through practical exercises, educational applications and real-world connection. Finally, the evaluation phase is operationally executed through structured formative and peer assessment.

Engagement

Table 2. Findings of Observation Based on the 5E Inquiry Model (Engagement)

Theme	Subtheme	Observation Indicator	Observation Evidence
Questioning as An Early Engagement Strategy	Student Engagement Strategies Through Early Stimulation	Maps stimulate student engagement	The lecturer asked the students "Why is it named <i>Jabal Tariq</i> ?" as shown on the map encouraging student engagement (A/P1)
	Activation of Existing Knowledge	Past learning questions and answers	The lecturer prompted the students to provide a summary of the verse of poetry they learned in the previous lesson <i>Qasidah Al-ḥaqqu ablaaju wāḍiḥu al-minhāji</i> (The poem of truth is clear and its path is evident) (A/P8)

Table 2 shows that the Engage phase was successfully implemented by utilizing questioning as an early engagement strategy through initial stimulation and activation of students' existing knowledge to the questions given by the lecturer. Therefore, lecturers can use various techniques to encourage student engagement by using the same strategy on students' Arabic language proficiency (Samah and Aishah, 2024). Meanwhile, according to El Haimeur (2024) student engagement and student motivation can be increased by conducting inquiry-based teaching. Meanwhile Ismail (2023) stated that short activities implemented in the classroom can encourage curiosity and stimulate existing knowledge.

Exploration

Table 3. Findings of Observation Based on the 5E Inquiry Model (Exploration)

Theme	Subtheme	Observation Indicator	Observation Evidence
Building Understanding Through Exploration of Reading Material	Exploration of Information Through Various Reference Sources	Explore introductory reading materials on instructional slides	The lecturer asked students to read and explore the reading material on the teaching slides about “Writing official letters in Turkish” before giving them questions (A/P8)
Exploring Digital Resource-Based Learning	Information Exploration Through Digital Platforms and Technologies	Explore word meanings via Google image	The lecturer requested students to explore the meaning of words in a verse of poetry “ <i>Aynāki ghābatā nakhīlin sā‘ata al-saḥar, aw shurfatāni rāḥa yan ‘ā ‘anhumā al-qamar</i> ” (“Your eyes are two palm-tree forests at early dawn, or two balconies from which the moonlight recedes”) in Google Images (A/PK8)
Exploring Understanding Through Inquiry Tasks	Question-Based Assignments and Inquiry-Based Problem Solving	Answer questions based on number choices	The lecturer carried out activities that encourage students to explore and answer questions based on the numbers chosen for the topic <i>Al-Ījāz</i> (C/P9)

Table 3 demonstrates that students are trained to explore literary content independently without direct explanations or information provision from the lecturer. The exploration focuses on analyzing reading materials, digital resources and inquiry tasks assign by the lecturer. Such autonomous behavior in seeking information aligns perfectly with the core principles of the Exploration phase. According to Ismail (2023), students' process skills in observing, investigating and communicating are highly encouraged during this exploratory phase. Consequently, fostering an active exploration attitude during teaching and learning sessions significantly enhance students' cognitive and mental development (Kamaruddin and Tahir, 2022).

Explanation

Table 4. Findings of Observation Based on the 5E Inquiry Model (Explanation)

Theme	Subtheme	Observation Indicator	Observation Evidence
Clarification of Understanding Through the Guidance of the Speaker	Explanation and Correction of Errors by the Lecturer	Comment writing and language	The lecturer gives comments and corrections on the language usage in “ <i>Wujūdu marākiza ‘ilmiyyatīn</i> ” to “ <i>Wujūdu markazin ‘ilmiyyīn</i> ” (“The existence of scientific centers”) (B/P12)
	Explanation of Concepts Through Direct Guidance from Lecturers	Additional explanation for the aspect of Balaghah	The lecturer explains the meaning of the couplet with its true meaning and the meaning of the balaghah aspect of “ <i>Ghamru ar-ridā‘i idhā tabassama dāḥikan, ghuliqat li-dahkatihī riqābu al-māli.</i> ” (C/P17)
	Explanation of Concepts through the use of Teaching Aids	Description assisted by Google Image	The lecturer explains the words in the verse using Google Images of “ <i>Qal‘at Ḥalab</i> ” (<i>Citadel of Aleppo</i>) and “ <i>Qufl Ritaj</i> ” (Kaaba door padlock key) (A/P8)

Table 4 demonstrates that the Explain phase plays a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding through lecturer guidance and conceptual explanations. By utilizing teaching aids, lecturers are able to connect students' initial answers with supplementary explanations serving as a strategy that helps students develop a deeper and more structured comprehension. According to Nugraha, et. al (2024) stated that understanding the concepts explored by students makes it easier for lecturers to discuss and clarify disagreements during the PdP session. This is supported by Ismail (2023), stating the method of dealing with confusion of questions and ideas that arise in the classroom by implementing this explanation phase.

Elaboration

Table 5. Findings of Observation Based on the 5E Inquiry Model (Elaboration)

Theme	Subtheme	Observation Indicator	Observation Evidence
Developing Understanding Through Reinforcement Activities and Learning Applications	Developing Understanding Through the Use of Learning Materials and Technology	Development based on the marriage traditions of Malaysia and Sudan	The lecturer expanded knowledge related to traditions in Malaysia and Sudan about marriage traditions (A/P9)
	Application and Development of Understanding Through Relation to Real-World Contexts	Application of the concept to the poem for the topic <i>Al-Saj'</i> (rhymed prose)	The students gave other examples of topic <i>Al-Saj'</i> (rhymed prose) in the Qasidah Burdah written by Imam Al-Busiri " <i>A-min tadzakkuri jīrānim-bi-dhī salami*Mazajta dam'an jaraa mim-muqlatim-bi-dami</i> " which is (<i>salami - bi-dami</i>) to apply the new concept (B/P16)

The Elaborate phase is implemented through extended questions posed by the lecturer so that students can connect existing knowledge to new situations. Consequently, students can apply their understanding through explanations and answers provided during the session. Table 5 shows that this cognitive expansion by linking two concepts and synthesizing students' responses apply their knowledge deeper into the topic of Arabic literature. Furthermore, it emphasizes the students' ability to expand, connect and use information more thoroughly. According to Ismail (2023), students engage in supplementary activities such as presentations and additional investigations to strengthen their conceptual understanding and master new skills. In this phase, students successfully expand their understanding and apply it within a broader context (Nugraha et al., 2024).

Evaluation

Table 6. Findings of Observation Based on the 5E Inquiry Model (Evaluation)

Theme	Subtheme	Observation Indicator	Observation Evidence
Task-Based Assessment	Quiz-Based Assessment, Forums and Exams	Individual quizzes	The lecturer conducted individual quizzes as an assessment for the question "Comparison between Romanticism and Realism" (A/PK23)
Formative Assessment Through Questioning and Reinforcement Training	Comprehension Assessment Through Oral Questioning	Reinforcement Training Through Oral Questioning	The lecturer asked questions to assess student understanding related to "What is the difference between official letters and personal letters?" (A/P15)
	Assessment Through Training and Reinforcement Activities	Kahoot quiz implementation	The lecturer showed Kahoot as a strengthening exercise for students regarding <i>al-tashbih</i> topic (C/P13)

Peer Assessment	Implementing Peer Assessment Through Feedback and Collaborative Activities	Implementation of Gallery Walk	The students carried out a Gallery Walk activity. Q (Group 1): “The question is about forms of human expression. Are you talking about literature? How?” R (Group Two): “Debate, Letters” (A/P15)
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Table 6 shows that students’ level mastery can be evaluated through the quizzes during the Evaluate phase. This assessment element is also implemented via Kahoot quizzes and Gallery Walk activities to gauge student comprehension of the topic studied. Furthermore, these techniques serve as effective tools to measure the level of mastery and ability of students to recall and apply their knowledge within Arabic literature. According to Hardy (2024), this phase aims to evaluate student understanding through both formative or summative assessment conducted within that classroom environment.

Overall, the observation findings show that the 5E inquiry model is applied systematically within the classroom during the teaching and learning of Arabic literature courses at public higher education institutions. The application of this 5E model is carried out in stages rather than being implemented comprehensively for each teaching and learning sessions. Therefore, each phase of this 5E framework plays a distinct role in supporting student engagement, facilitating individual or group information exploration, strengthening comprehension, developing conceptual ideas and assessing learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the integration of the 5E inquiry model, namely Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate significantly assists lecturers and students in teaching and learning Arabic literature. Through classroom observations, the Engagement phase enables students to communicate with the lecturer two-way communication by answering the direct questions given. For the Exploration phase, lecturers provide opportunities for students to actively explore knowledge using digital applications independently to enhance their understanding. Next, for the Explanation element, supplemental explanations are provided to strengthen the comprehension of Arabic literature concepts. The Elaboration phase encourages students to provide explanations and solutions based on their knowledge rather than relying solely on the immediate learning topic. For the Evaluation phase, the assessment carried out through individual written quiz assignments to measure students' mastery of Arabic literature.

The findings of the study show that the 5E approach can serve as a valuable framework for teaching Arabic language and literature moving away from conventional lecture-based methods toward interactive instruction. Educators can leverage this model to foster activities based on 21st Century Learning principles and Bloom's Taxonomy. From a curricular perspective, the implementation of 5E supports that Arabic literature courses in higher education in incorporating inquiry elements as effective and interesting teaching strategies. This integration is crucial as Arabic literature course are often perceived by student as challenging and difficult to comprehend. Furthermore, teacher training should be conducted annually to help lecturers refine their instructional methodologies and highlight inquiry-based pedagogy for teaching Arabic literature. Consequently, such training can generate more ideas, increase motivation and encourage more creative and critical thinking among lecturers to deliver more effective teaching aligned with contemporary educational developments.

Future studies can further expand the observations to wider range of Arabic literature courses by conducting multisite studies across several public universities in Malaysia to comprehensively examine diverse instructional methodologies. In addition, future researchers should evaluate the effectiveness of this 5E inquiry model by employing research that uses triangulation methods. Utilizing interview, observation and document analysis will yield robust qualitative data and offering a deeper understanding of both educators’ and students’ perspectives.

This study is limited to observations conducted within Arabic literature courses at a single public university

and does not employ methodological triangulation to gather broader datasets. The data collection period was constrained two months following a predetermined observation schedule to examine instructional delivery over time. Consequently, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the wider context of Arabic literature education, nevertheless they offer valuable preliminary insights into the practical implementation of the five core elements within the 5E inquiry model.

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