



Implementation of Student Teams Achievement Division Strategy Assisted by Strip Story in Mahārah Kitābah Learning

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Abstract

Arabic writing (maharah kitābah) instruction in Islamic junior secondary schools continues to encounter challenges, particularly in students' difficulties organizing ideas coherently, applying Arabic grammatical structures accurately, and actively participating in writing activities. These problems are associated with the limited integration of cooperative learning strategies and contextual instructional media. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by Strip Story media in maharah kitābah instruction at MTs Jauharatul Islamiyah. The study employed a qualitative case study design involving the principal, an Arabic language teacher, and students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings indicate that the implementation of STAD assisted by Strip Story was carried out through systematic instructional planning, collaborative group learning, individual assessment, and group recognition. Teacher readiness, heterogeneous grouping, and contextual learning media supported successful implementation, whereas differences in students' Arabic proficiency and limited instructional time became the main challenges. This study contributes to Arabic language pedagogy by providing empirical evidence on the implementation of integrated cooperative learning and contextual media to support maharah kitābah instruction.

Keywords: Maharah Kitābah; Pembelajaran Kooperatif; STAD; Strip Story

Abstrak

Pembelajaran maharah kitābah di madrasah tsanawiyah masih menghadapi berbagai tantangan, terutama dalam hal kemampuan peserta didik mengorganisasi gagasan secara runtut, menerapkan kaidah tata bahasa Arab secara tepat, serta berpartisipasi aktif dalam kegiatan menulis. Permasalahan tersebut berkaitan dengan belum optimalnya integrasi strategi pembelajaran kooperatif dan pemanfaatan media pembelajaran yang kontekstual. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi strategi Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) berbantuan media Strip Story dalam pembelajaran maharah kitābah di MTs Jauharatul Islamiyah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus yang melibatkan kepala madrasah, seorang guru Bahasa Arab, dan peserta didik yang dipilih secara purposive. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi STAD berbantuan Strip Story dilaksanakan melalui perencanaan pembelajaran yang sistematis, pembelajaran kelompok kolaboratif, penilaian individual, dan pemberian penghargaan kelompok. Keberhasilan implementasi didukung oleh kesiapan guru, pembentukan kelompok heterogen, serta penggunaan media pembelajaran yang kontekstual, sedangkan perbedaan kemampuan berbahasa Arab peserta didik dan keterbatasan waktu pembelajaran menjadi kendala utama. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi empiris terhadap pengembangan pedagogi bahasa Arab melalui implementasi

pembelajaran kooperatif yang terintegrasi dengan media kontekstual untuk mendukung pembelajaran maharah kitābah.

Kata kunci: *maharah kitābah; pembelajaran kooperatif; Strip Story; STAD*

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Introduction

The transformation of educational paradigms in the twenty-first century has shifted the orientation of learning from the mere transfer of knowledge to a process that positions students as active agents in constructing knowledge through interaction, collaboration, and meaningful learning experiences (Andyanie et al., 2025). From the perspective of cooperative learning, the learning process becomes more effective when students exchange ideas, engage in discussions, and share responsibility for the success of their groups, thereby enhancing not only academic achievement but also social and communication skills (Johnson et al., 2014; Lie, 2017; Isjoni, 2019; Yang, 2023). This principle is consistent with the view of Jolliffe (2015), who emphasizes that collaborative learning provides opportunities for students to develop higher-order thinking skills through shared learning activities. In the context of Arabic language instruction, the implementation of collaboration-oriented learning strategies is increasingly important because language proficiency depends not only on the mastery of linguistic rules but also on the ability to use the language actively in various learning situations (Sofa & Sugianto, 2024). Therefore, Arabic language learning requires instructional strategies capable of integrating linguistic, cognitive, and social dimensions in a balanced manner.

Among the four Arabic language skills, *maharah kitābah* (writing skill) is one of the most complex productive competencies because it requires students to integrate vocabulary mastery, grammatical structures, idea organization, and accurate application of language rules in written composition (Lazuardi et al., 2025). Tarigan (2008) explains that writing is a cognitive process involving the ability to organize ideas logically and systematically before expressing them in written language. In Arabic language learning, this competence serves as a crucial indicator, as students are expected not only to comprehend the language receptively but also to communicate ideas effectively through accurate and meaningful writing. Research by Ayumi et al. (2025) demonstrates that improving *maharah kitābah* requires learning experiences that provide opportunities for students to interact and collaboratively construct understanding throughout the learning process. Similarly, Fitri et al. (2025) argue that student-centered writing

instruction produces higher-quality written work than teacher-centered approaches. These findings indicate that enhancing the quality of *maharah kitābah* instruction requires learning strategies that actively engage students throughout the writing process.

Nevertheless, numerous studies have reported that *maharah kitābah* instruction continues to face challenges that affect students' writing proficiency. Maslihah (2023) found that students frequently encounter difficulties in developing written ideas, resulting in compositions that are unsystematic and insufficiently developed. Similar findings were reported by Nashoih et al. (2023), who identified persistent errors in the application of Arabic grammatical rules, particularly in syntax, which negatively affected writing quality. Meanwhile, Pradana et al. (2024) demonstrated that the use of visual media within cooperative learning environments helps students organize their ideas more systematically before transforming them into written texts. Previous studies have demonstrated that cooperative learning and contextual media positively contribute to the development of Arabic writing skills. For example, Maksum (2025) reported that integrating the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy with Strip Story media created a more active learning environment and improved students' *maharah kitābah*. However, the study primarily described the implementation process and its classroom outcomes. It provided limited explanation regarding how instructional planning, teacher facilitation, classroom interaction, and contextual factors jointly shape the successful integration of STAD and Strip Story. Therefore, further investigation is required to examine the pedagogical processes underlying the implementation of this integrated instructional approach.

Although numerous studies have explored efforts to improve *maharah kitābah*, their focus remains relatively fragmented. Studies by Ayumi et al. (2025) and Fitri et al. (2025) primarily emphasize collaborative learning as a means of enhancing writing skills, whereas Arafah et al. (2024) and Wahyudi and Hidayat (2021) investigate the effectiveness of the STAD model in improving learning activities and outcomes. Meanwhile, Maslihah (2023) and Salsabila and Nasir (2025) demonstrate that the Strip Story medium effectively assists students in generating ideas through visual stimuli. However, these studies generally examine instructional models and learning media separately and focus predominantly on learning outcomes. Consequently, the integration of the STAD strategy with the Strip Story medium in *maharah kitābah* instruction has not been comprehensively explained. This condition reveals a research

gap that warrants further investigation to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how these two components can be effectively integrated in Arabic writing instruction.

The principles of cooperative learning emphasize interaction among students as the foundation for constructing knowledge through collaboration and shared responsibility (Johnson et al., 2014; Suprijono, 2009; Slavin, 2016). One instructional model that embodies these principles is Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD), which encourages students to learn in heterogeneous groups while maintaining individual accountability. The effectiveness of STAD in Arabic language learning has been reported by Ramadhan et al. (2026) and Rusdiah (2022), particularly in enhancing student participation and learning outcomes. On the other hand, Strip Story functions as a visual stimulus that helps students organize sequences of ideas before developing them into written compositions (Maksum, 2025; Pradana et al., 2024). The integration of STAD and Strip Story is therefore considered to have the potential to create more active, collaborative, and systematic *maharah kitābah* instruction by combining collaborative group interaction with visually supported idea development.

Based on this research gap, the present study investigates the implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by the Strip Story medium in *maharah kitābah* instruction at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic junior secondary school) level. Rather than claiming a completely new instructional model, this study contributes to an area that remains underexplored by providing an integrated analysis of the instructional strategy and learning medium, with particular attention to classroom learning dynamics, student interactions, teachers' roles, and the contextual factors that shape the implementation process. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on cooperative learning in Arabic language education while offering practical insights for Madrasah Tsanawiyah teachers in designing *maharah kitābah* instruction that is more active, collaborative, and meaningful. Accordingly, this study aims to describe the implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by the Strip Story medium in *maharah kitābah* instruction and to identify the factors that facilitate and hinder its implementation.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by the Strip Story medium in *maharah kitābah* instruction. A case study design was selected because it enables researchers to examine

a phenomenon comprehensively within its natural context, thereby producing a rich description of the instructional process (Yin, 2018). The study was conducted at MTs Jauharatul Islamiyah, focusing on Arabic language instruction in *maharah kitābah*.

The research participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, whereby informants were chosen based on their direct knowledge and experience of the instructional phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The participants consisted of one principal, one Arabic language teacher, and fifteen Grade VIII students who participated in *maharah kitābah* instruction using the STAD strategy assisted by the Strip Story medium. The principal and teacher were selected because they were directly involved in planning and implementing the instructional program, while the students were selected because they actively participated in the learning activities. The inclusion of these participants enabled the researchers to obtain multiple perspectives on the implementation of the instructional process.

Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations focused on examining instructional planning, teacher facilitation, student interactions, collaborative learning activities, and the implementation of the STAD learning stages. Semi-structured interviews with the principal, teacher, and selected students were conducted to explore their experiences, perceptions, and challenges during the implementation process. Document analysis included teaching modules, lesson plans, instructional materials, students' written work, assessment records, and other supporting documents to corroborate the observational and interview findings. The trustworthiness of the data was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking to enhance the credibility of the research findings.

Data were analyzed interactively following the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data condensation stage, the researchers organized and coded observation notes, interview transcripts, and documents by identifying themes related to instructional planning, classroom implementation, teacher facilitation, student interaction, and supporting and inhibiting factors. In the data display stage, the coded data were organized into descriptive matrices and thematic narratives to facilitate comparisons across different participants and data sources. Finally, during the conclusion drawing and verification stage, the researchers interpreted recurring patterns and relationships among the identified

themes, while continuously verifying the emerging findings through triangulation and member checking to ensure their consistency and credibility. The analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process, enabling the researchers to develop a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by the Strip Story medium in *maharah kitābah* instruction at MTs Jauharatul Islamiyah.

Results and Discussion

Instructional Planning as the Foundation for STAD Implementation

Classroom observations, document analysis, and interviews showed that instructional planning was a critical precondition for implementing the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by Strip Story in *maharah kitābah* instruction. The teacher systematically prepared learning objectives, materials, procedures, media, heterogeneous groups, and assessment instruments, aligning them with students' characteristics and the target writing competencies. As the teacher explained, *"Our objective is not only to enable students to write in Arabic but also to encourage them to discuss, support one another, and construct stories collaboratively with their group members. Therefore, all learning activities are designed from the beginning in accordance with the STAD procedures."* This statement reflects an intentional integration of academic and social goals from the outset of instruction.

The Strip Story medium was likewise prepared in advance: story strips were developed according to the instructional themes and distributed identically to every group, giving all students an equal opportunity to negotiate sequence and meaning before writing. Groups were also formed heterogeneously by academic ability rather than at random. As the principal explained, *"The teacher does not assign groups randomly but considers each student's ability so that group members can complement one another during discussions and while completing the assigned tasks."*

These findings confirm Slavin's (2015) argument that STAD's effectiveness depends on integrating content presentation, collaborative learning, individual accountability, and group recognition within a coherent sequence, and align with Ramadhan et al. (2026) and Al-Kaosari et al. (2025), who emphasize that cooperative learning becomes meaningful only when teachers deliberately design tasks, media, and group composition in advance. However, systematic planning alone did not guarantee smooth implementation: differences in students' Arabic proficiency still required

continuous, adaptive facilitation during the lesson, echoing Fitria and Zulheddi (2025), who found that variations in students' academic readiness continued to affect STAD's effectiveness despite careful planning. Instructional planning thus functioned less as a fixed procedure than as a flexible pedagogical framework that had to be complemented by responsive classroom management.

STAD Implementation and Collaborative Engagement in Writing

Implementation proceeded through communicating objectives, presenting material, collaborative group activity, individual assessment, and group recognition, with the teacher consistently acting as a facilitator rather than the primary source of information. Each group received an identical set of Strip Story cards and worked together to sequence events before composing text. As the teacher described, *"Each group receives the same set of story strips. They first discuss the correct sequence of the story and then collaboratively construct sentences until they produce a complete text."*

During discussion, students negotiated vocabulary, revised sentence structures, and assisted peers; students with stronger proficiency frequently explained language choices to others, who responded with questions and alternative expressions. One student noted, *"Whenever we encounter unfamiliar words or sentences, we usually discuss them together. Friends who understand better help explain them until we are able to complete the story."* Written work showed more coherent idea development after this collaborative stage than in initial drafts. Following discussion, students completed individual writing tasks that fed into group scores, consistent with STAD's individual-accountability principle; the teacher explained that recognition rewarded cooperation and responsibility, not only the strongest group's output, an approach observed to heighten students' enthusiasm throughout the lesson.

These results support Slavin's (2015) view that STAD balances individual accountability with group success, and Johnson and Johnson's (2009) argument that meaningful cooperative learning requires positive interdependence, accountability, promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing acting together. They also parallel Avidah (2020) and Ramadhan et al. (2026), who reported that STAD increases participation through structured collaboration, and Al-Kaosari et al. (2025), who stressed that cooperative learning becomes meaningful when students actively negotiate ideas and share responsibility. However, participation was not evenly distributed: stronger students often took mentoring roles while weaker students relied more on assistance before contributing, refining Fitria and Zulheddi's (2025) more general claim that STAD

improves outcomes through participation by showing that linguistic competence shapes how that participation is distributed within groups. This underscores the teacher's role in facilitating equitable interaction so that cooperative benefits reach all learners, extending Haqiqi et al. (2025), who showed that cooperative learning supports Arabic writing through discussion and peer feedback, by indicating that collaboration also builds confidence and shared responsibility, not only written quality.

The Role of Strip Story in Constructing Mahārah Kitābah

Beyond serving as a visual aid, Strip Story provided a structured narrative framework that helped students organize ideas before writing, reducing the difficulty of generating ideas independently. This is consistent with Ummah et al. (2025), who found that fragmented story sequences help students organize ideas more coherently, and with Fu'adah (2021), who argues that instructional media are most meaningful when functioning as cognitive scaffolds for organizing vocabulary and ideas prior to production.

However, the present findings show that Strip Story's effectiveness was inseparable from cooperative interaction: students relied on peer discussion to verify vocabulary, negotiate structure, and confirm sequence, and teacher facilitation was often needed when groups could not resolve difficulties independently. This broadens Ummah et al.'s (2025) conclusion, centered on writing-performance gains, by showing that the medium also shapes the learning process itself by stimulating dialogue and collaborative problem-solving. It likewise extends Haqiqi et al. (2025) by showing that such interaction did not occur automatically once media were introduced: stronger students explained vocabulary and sentence patterns more actively, while weaker students participated confidently mainly after receiving peer or teacher guidance. Strip Story's contribution to *maharah kitābah*, therefore, lay less in its visual features than in the opportunities it created for negotiating meaning collaboratively before individual writing.

Supporting Factors, Challenges, and Pedagogical Implications

Several factors supported implementation. Teacher readiness to facilitate—continuously monitoring discussions, encouraging equal participation, and guiding only when needed—was central, as reflected in the teacher's statement: *"In this type of learning, the teacher must continuously observe the group discussions. Whenever a group encounters difficulties, we provide guidance without immediately giving the answers so that students can continue learning by finding solutions together."* The Strip Story medium itself

also stimulated participation by prompting negotiation over story order, as one student explained: *“Learning with story strips is more interesting because we have to discuss the story before writing. If someone makes a mistake, we help each other correct it.”*

Nonetheless, two challenges emerged. First, differences in students’ Arabic proficiency affected the pace and quality of collaboration, with stronger students assisting peers in vocabulary and structure while weaker students needed more guidance, reflected in written work showing varied accuracy and vocabulary use. The teacher confirmed, *“Students’ abilities are not the same. Some can construct sentences quickly, while others still need guidance in selecting appropriate vocabulary and organizing sentence structures.”* Second, collaborative discussion, sequencing, writing, and presentation required more time than conventional instruction, though students remained engaged throughout; the lesson plan had anticipated this by allocating additional time for discussion and reflection.

These findings resonate with Fitria and Zulheddi (2025), who linked STAD’s effectiveness to classroom management, academic readiness, and available time, and with Pakanna et al. (2025), who found that card-based media are most effective when they turn learning into an interactive rather than purely presentational process. Taken together, the results indicate that STAD assisted by Strip Story is effective not simply because it combines a cooperative model with visual media, but because instructional planning, collaborative interaction, contextual media, and adaptive teacher facilitation operate as interconnected elements. Developing *maharah kitābah* therefore requires teachers to combine these elements deliberately: systematic planning to structure collaboration, media that scaffold idea organization, and continuous facilitation that keeps participation equitable across students with differing language proficiency. Consistent with Ramadhan et al. (2026), shared responsibility paired with individual accountability drives participation, while consistent with Al-Kaosari et al. (2025), such participation remains meaningful only when deliberately organized by the teacher – reinforcing that the success of integrating STAD and Strip Story in *maharah kitābah* instruction depends ultimately on coherent pedagogical design rather than on any single component.

This study is limited by its single-site, qualitative case-study design, its focus on *maharah kitābah* alone, and the absence of quantitative measurement of learning gains; future research involving multiple schools, comparative cooperative models, or mixed-methods designs is recommended to extend these findings.

Conclusion

The implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) strategy assisted by the Strip Story medium made a positive contribution to maharah kitābah instruction at MTs Jauharatul Islamiyah by creating a learning environment that was more collaborative, participatory, and oriented toward the development of Arabic writing skills. The synthesis of the findings demonstrates that instructional effectiveness cannot be attributed to the cooperative learning strategy or the instructional medium in isolation, but emerges from their deliberate integration within a coherent instructional design—one in which systematic planning, contextual media, collaborative interaction, and continuous teacher facilitation function as interdependent elements. Pedagogically, this implies that teachers seeking to strengthen maharah kitābah should not treat STAD and Strip Story as ready-made procedures, but as components that must be actively aligned with students' linguistic readiness and adapted through ongoing facilitation to ensure that collaboration remains equitable and productive for learners of varying proficiency. These findings contribute to the field of Arabic language education by confirming that the synergy between STAD and Strip Story represents a promising pedagogical alternative for enhancing maharah kitābah at the madrasah level, while also underscoring that its success is contingent on the quality of pedagogical design rather than on the model itself.

Nevertheless, this study is subject to several limitations that constrain the scope of its conclusions. As a single-site qualitative case study, its findings reflect the particular institutional and classroom context of MTs Jauharatul Islamiyah and should not be generalized to other madrasah settings without caution; the exclusive focus on maharah kitābah also leaves open the question of whether similar dynamics would emerge in other Arabic language skills, and the absence of quantitative measurement means the magnitude of learning improvement remains undetermined. These limitations point to concrete directions for future research: subsequent studies are encouraged to employ multi-site or comparative case designs to test the transferability of these findings across different madrasah contexts, to adopt quantitative or mixed-methods approaches capable of measuring the extent of improvement in students' writing performance, and to examine how the integration of STAD and Strip Story functions across other language skills and educational levels. Such efforts would strengthen the empirical foundation for

cooperative, media-assisted approaches to Arabic writing instruction and provide more generalizable guidance for practice.

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