



Transforming Interest in Arabic Language Learning: An Analysis of the Edu-humorous Video meme trend on Instagram as an innovative pedagogical solution

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| Article Info | Abstract |
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| <p>Received: 2026-02-21 Revised: 2026-04-20 Accepted: 2026-04-29</p> <p>Keywords: <i>Arabic language learning, educational-humorous meme videos, Instagram, learning interest, learning representation, digital culture.</i></p> <p>DOI: 10.24256/ideasv14i1.9740</p> <p>Corresponding Author: Muhammad Ari Nurrohman arnrr51@gmail.com Universitas KH. Mukhtar Syafaat Blokagung Banyuwangi Indonesia</p> | <p><i>This study is motivated by the low level of students' interest in learning Arabic, which is often perceived as a difficult and less engaging subject amid the rapid development of digital culture. The aim of this research is to analyze the role of educational-humorous meme videos on the Instagram account @qawla.id in increasing students' interest in learning Arabic and in shaping a new, more contextual and adaptive representation of Arabic learning. This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach and was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 4 Banyuwangi as the research site. Data collection techniques include classroom observation, in-depth interviews with students and Arabic language teachers, as well as text studies and document analysis of educational-humorous meme video content. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing in a systematic manner. The results indicate that educational-humorous meme videos can increase students' interest and engagement in learning, reduce anxiety in Arabic language learning, and foster a positive representation of the subject. Furthermore, the use of meme videos encourages a shift in the learning paradigm from teacher-centered to learner-centered and bridges formal classroom learning with students' digital culture. Therefore, educational-humorous meme videos can be regarded as an innovative pedagogical strategy that is relevant and effective for the development of Arabic language learning in the digital era.</i></p> |

Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology and social media has significantly transformed patterns of interaction, communication, and knowledge acquisition among young people, including in the field of education. In the context of Arabic language learning, particularly for beginners, several persistent challenges remain, such as low learning interest, the perception of Arabic as a difficult and rigid subject, and the use of teaching methods that are often monotonous and less relevant to students' daily lives (Alhaq, 2023; Fatmawati et al., 2025; Pendidikan, 2024). These issues indicate a gap between traditional pedagogical approaches and the characteristics of digital-era learners.

At the same time, the widespread use of social media—especially Instagram—has shaped a new learning culture that is visual, fast-paced, and entertainment-oriented (Zahrah & Abidjulu, 2025). Previous studies have shown that students tend to be more engaged and motivated when learning materials are presented in formats that are closely related to their everyday experiences (Al et al., 2024). In this context, the emergence of educational–humorous meme videos on Instagram offers a potentially relevant and contextual learning approach for the digital generation (Irmadini et al., 2025). Meme content that integrates humor, visuals, and simplified language can create a more relaxed and engaging learning environment (Ilmiah & Madrasah, 2024).

Several studies have explored the use of Instagram in Arabic language learning. Wijaya and Rismawati (2023) found that Instagram-based learning could increase students' interest compared to conventional methods. Similarly, Fawzani (2023) demonstrated that Instagram effectively supports vocabulary acquisition through visual content. Meanwhile, Ibrahim (2024) highlighted the role of memes as a medium for literacy development, showing their ability to generate high engagement. Batran (2023) further examined the use of memes in Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) classroom, emphasizing their potential to enhance motivation and participation. However, most of these studies focus on social media as a general learning tool, rather than specifically analyzing meme videos as a distinct form of digital pedagogical practice.

Based on this gap, the novelty of this study lies in its focus on educational–humorous meme videos as a specific pedagogical approach in Arabic language learning. This study does not merely position memes as supplementary media but examines them as a form of digital cultural practice that integrates humor, visual communication, and educational content. In addition, this research emphasizes learning interest as the main analytical focus, aiming to understand how digital content trends influence students' learning preferences in the context of Arabic language education.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of educational–humorous meme videos from the Instagram account @Qawla.id in representing Arabic language learning and influencing students' interest in learning Arabic. This

research assumes that learning interest is not only affected by the linguistic complexity of the subject but also by the alignment between teaching approaches and the characteristics of digital-native learners, who tend to prefer visual, concise, and contextually meaningful learning materials enriched with affective elements such as humor.

To guide the analysis, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do educational-humorous meme videos from @Qawla.id represent Arabic language learning?
2. How do these meme videos influence students' interest in learning Arabic?

The Instagram account Instagram @qawla.id represents a form of digital learning media that is adaptive to the development of communication technology and the characteristics of the digital generation. Quantitatively, the account demonstrates a consistent posting frequency with a relatively high volume of content, indicating the implementation of a content sustainability strategy to maintain algorithmic visibility on social media platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Qualitatively, the content is predominantly composed of short videos (reels) and meme-based visuals that integrate elements of education and entertainment (edutainment), thereby enhancing learning engagement (Mayer, 2009). The thematic focus centers on Arabic language learning, including vocabulary introduction, simple conversations, and contextual expressions linked to students' and santri's daily lives.

The communication style tends to be informal, persuasive, and infused with cultural-religious nuances, which strengthens the emotional connection between the content creator and the audience. Furthermore, the utilization of digital trends, such as viral audio and meme formats, reflects an effective engagement strategy in increasing learners' interest, particularly among beginners, as emphasized in the concept of participatory culture, where audiences actively engage in interpreting and disseminating content (Jenkins, 2006). Therefore, this account can be understood as a form of social media-based pedagogical innovation that integrates entertainment and learning in a contextual manner, aligning with the dynamics of education in the digital era.

Method

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to explore the use of educational-humorous meme videos from the Instagram account @Qawla.id in Arabic language learning. This approach is chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of how meme-based content functions as a pedagogical practice and how it influences students' learning interest within a real classroom context.

Rather than focusing on hypothesis testing or numerical measurement, this study emphasizes the exploration of students' perceptions, experiences, and responses to meme-based learning. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to analyze both the content characteristics of meme videos—such as visual elements, language use, humor types, and educational messages—and the learning dynamics that emerge during their implementation in the classroom.

Data were collected through three main techniques: classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis of meme videos. Classroom observations were conducted to examine student engagement, interaction, and participation during meme-based learning activities. Interviews were used to capture students' and teachers' perspectives on the use of meme videos, particularly in relation to learning interest, motivation, and comprehension. In addition, document analysis was carried out to systematically examine selected meme videos in terms of their linguistic and visual features.

This approach also enables the researcher to understand the broader social and cultural context of Instagram as a digital learning environment that is closely connected to students' daily lives. Therefore, the qualitative case study design is considered appropriate for uncovering the processes, dynamics, and pedagogical potential of educational–humorous meme videos in enhancing students' interest in learning Arabic.

Object and Subject Research

The object of this study is a set of educational–humorous meme videos published on the Instagram account @Qawla.id. A total of 15 meme videos were purposively selected based on their relevance to Arabic language learning topics, such as basic vocabulary (mufradat), daily expressions, and simple sentence structures. These videos were chosen because they represent key characteristics of educational meme content, including the integration of humor, visual elements, and simplified Arabic language presented in a contextual and relatable manner. The selected content enables an in-depth analysis of how linguistic features, humor strategies, and visual communication are used to deliver educational messages in Arabic learning.

The subjects of this study consist of 20 students of grade XI and one Arabic language teacher at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 4 Banyuwangi. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, with the criteria that students are active users of Instagram and have prior exposure to digital content, including meme videos. MAN 4 Banyuwangi was chosen as the research site due to its relevance to the study context, as students demonstrate strong engagement with social media in their daily lives.

This setting provides an appropriate context for examining students' perceptions, responses, and learning interest toward the use of educational-humorous meme videos in Arabic language learning. Therefore, both the research object and subjects are considered suitable for addressing the research objectives and for generating contextually grounded findings.

Data Sources

The analysis of 10 educational-humorous meme videos from the Instagram account @Qawla.id is summarized in Table 1. The table presents the main characteristics of meme content, including Arabic language material, visual elements, humor types, and their corresponding educational functions.

| No | Meme Theme | Arabic Content | Visual Elements | Type of Humor | Educational Message | Learning Aspect |
|----|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | Greetings | “السلام عليكم” (Assalamu'alaikum) | Student greeting teacher in class | Situational humor | Introducing basic greetings in real context | Vocabulary (Mufradat) |
| 2 | Daily Activities | “أنا أذهب إلى المدرسة” (I go to school) | Student oversleeping then rushing | Relatable daily-life humor | Understanding simple sentence structure | Grammar + Context |
| 3 | Classroom Interaction | “هل فهمت؟” (Do you understand?) | Teacher asking confused students | Irony humor | Encouraging comprehension check | Listening & Response |
| 4 | Forgetting Vocabulary | “ما معنى...؟” (What does it mean?) | Student panicking in class | Exaggeration humor | Reinforcing vocabulary recall | Cognitive recall |
| 5 | Introductions | “اسمي أحمد” (My name is Ahmad) | Student introducing himself awkwardly | Awkward humor | Practicing self-introduction | Speaking skill |
| 6 | Asking Permission | “هل أستأذن؟” (May I ask permission?) | Student wanting to | Situational humor | Teaching polite | Pragmatic use |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | | | leave class | | expressions | |
| 7 | Numbers | “واحد، اثنان، ثلاثة” (1,2,3) | Counting incorrectly in funny way | Error- based humor | Reinforcing number vocabulary | Memorizati on |
| 8 | Food Vocabulary | “أنا أكل الأرز” (I eat rice) | Student eating too much | Hyperbole humor | Learning food-related vocabulary | Vocabulary |
| 9 | School Objects | “كتاب، قلم” (Book, pen) | Student forgetting tools | Relatable humor | Recognizing classroom objects | Vocabulary |
| 1 0 | Expression s | “أنا متعب” (I am tired) | Student after long class | Emotional humor | Expressing feelings in Arabic | Affective learning |

As shown in Table 1, most meme videos integrate basic Arabic language material with relatable daily-life contexts and humor. The dominant types of humor include situational, exaggeration, and relatable humor, which contribute to reducing students' anxiety and increasing engagement. In addition, the findings indicate that meme videos support multiple learning aspects, including vocabulary acquisition, grammatical understanding, and affective engagement.

The data sources in this study consist of primary data and secondary data.

1. Primary Data

Primary Data were obtained from

- a. the visual content, Arabic narration, forms of humor, learning themes, and patterns of material presentation contained in the meme videos.
- b. The results of in-depth interviews, observations, and students' responses.

2. Secondary Data

- a. textbooks, scientific journal articles, undergraduate theses, master's theses, and dissertations that discuss Arabic language learning, digital-based instructional media, the use of social media in education, as well as studies on humor and memes as educational tools.
- b. research reports, statistics on social media usage among

adolescents, as well as theoretical literature discussing learning interest, learning motivation, and the characteristics of the digital generation.

Data Collection Techniques

To obtain comprehensive and in-depth data, this study employed three main data collection techniques: text study, classroom observation, and semi-structured interviews:

1. Text Study (Meme Content Analysis)

The text study was conducted to analyze the linguistic and non-linguistic elements of the selected meme videos from the Instagram account @Qawla.id. A total of 15 meme videos were analyzed using purposive selection based on their relevance to Arabic language learning topics. The analysis focused on several aspects, including.

- Arabic vocabulary (mufradat) and sentence structure
- Contextual meaning and communicative function
- Types of humor (e.g., situational, exaggeration, relatable humor)
- Visual elements and their relationship to textual content

This analysis aimed to identify how educational messages are constructed through the integration of language, visuals, and humor.

2. Classroom Observation

Classroom observations were conducted to examine the implementation of meme-based learning and students' responses during the learning process. The observations were carried out in four sessions over a two-week period in Arabic language classes at MAN 4 Banyuwangi. The observation focused on:

- Students' engagement and participation
- Classroom interaction patterns (student-teacher and student-student)
- Students' reactions to meme videos (e.g., attention, discussion, emotional responses)
- Differences between conventional and meme-assisted learning activities

The observations were non-participatory, where the researcher acted as an observer without direct involvement in teaching activities. Field notes were used to systematically record classroom dynamics.

3. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into students' and teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of educational-humorous meme videos in Arabic language

learning.

A total of 10 students and 1 Arabic language teacher were interviewed. Each interview lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and was conducted in Indonesian. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically. The interview questions for students focused on:

- Learning interest and motivation
- Level of understanding of Arabic material
- Perceptions of meme video usage in learning
- Learning experiences before and after using meme-based content

Meanwhile, teacher interviews explored:

- Pedagogical perspectives on meme-based learning
- Ease of integrating meme videos into classroom instruction
- Perceived effectiveness and challenges in implementation

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach based on the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In addition, this study applied thematic coding to systematically categorize and interpret the data.

1. Data Reduction

At this stage, all data obtained from observations, interviews, and meme content analysis were organized and selected based on their relevance to the research questions. The researcher transcribed interview data, reviewed observation field notes, and examined meme video content. The data were then coded using thematic categories, including:

- Affective responses (e.g., enjoyment, reduced anxiety, motivation)
- Cognitive aspects (e.g., comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, understanding of grammar)
- Behavioral engagement (e.g., participation, interaction, attention during learning)
- Content characteristics (e.g., types of humor, visual elements, language features)

This coding process enabled the researcher to identify patterns and relationships across different data sources.

2. Data Presentation

The reduced and coded data were presented in an organized and systematic manner to facilitate interpretation. Data display included:

- Descriptive narratives explaining key findings
- Direct quotations from students and teachers to support interpretation
- Tables and matrices (e.g., meme analysis table) to summarize content characteristics
- Thematic groupings based on affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions

This stage allowed the researcher to compare findings across data sources and identify consistent patterns in the role of meme videos in Arabic language learning.

3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The final stage involved interpreting the data to answer the research questions and draw meaningful conclusions. The researcher analyzed the relationships between meme content characteristics and students' learning responses, linking the findings to relevant theoretical frameworks such as Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, Mayer's Multimedia Learning Theory, and constructivist learning theory.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, conclusions were continuously verified by re-examining the data and comparing results across different sources (triangulation). This process ensured that the interpretations were consistent, valid, and grounded in the data.

Research Ethics

This study adheres to established principles of academic research ethics. Prior to data collection, all participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, and scope of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and for student participants under the age of 18, permission was also secured from the school and relevant authorities.

Participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. To protect participants' privacy, all personal identities were anonymized in the research report, and pseudonyms were used in presenting interview data.

All data collected, including interview recordings, transcripts, and observation notes, were stored securely and used solely for research purposes. The researcher ensured that the data were not disclosed to unauthorized parties.

In addition, this study maintains academic integrity by properly

acknowledging all sources of information through appropriate citation practices. No form of plagiarism or data manipulation was involved in the research process.

Result

The findings of this study are derived from three main data sources: meme content analysis, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. The results are presented based on thematic categories, including affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions.

1. Representation of Arabic Learning through Meme Content (Content Analysis)

The analysis of 10 educational-humorous meme videos from the Instagram account @Qawla.id shows that Arabic language learning is presented in a more contextual and relatable manner. The content predominantly includes basic vocabulary, simple sentence structures, and everyday expressions embedded in humorous and visual narratives.

Most meme videos combine short Arabic texts with visual situations familiar to students, such as classroom interactions, daily routines, and common learning difficulties. For example, one meme shows a student forgetting vocabulary when asked by the teacher ("ما معنى هذا؟"), accompanied by an exaggerated panic reaction. This type of content reflects real student experiences and presents Arabic learning as less rigid and more approachable.

2. Affective Dimension: Reduced Anxiety and Increased Motivation

Findings from interviews and observations indicate that meme-based learning significantly influences students' emotional responses. Students reported that Arabic learning becomes more enjoyable and less intimidating when delivered through humorous meme videos.

One student stated:

"Usually, Arabic lessons feel heavy and boring, but when using meme videos, it feels more relaxed and fun." (Student 2)

Another student expressed:

"The memes make me less afraid of making mistakes because they show that it's normal." (Student 5)

Classroom observations also revealed that students frequently laughed, smiled, and showed positive emotional reactions during meme-based learning sessions. These responses indicate a reduction in learning anxiety and an increase in intrinsic motivation.

3. Cognitive Dimension: Improved Understanding and Retention

The findings also show that meme videos support students' cognitive processes, particularly in understanding and remembering Arabic material. The integration of visual elements and simple language helps students grasp meaning more easily.

As stated by one student:

“I remember vocabulary faster when it is shown in a funny situation.”
(Student 7)

In addition, observations indicate that students were more able to recall vocabulary and sentence structures when they were presented through meme-based contexts. The use of short and structured content also aligns with students’ preference for concise learning materials.

4. Behavioral Dimension: Increased Engagement and Participation

From a behavioral perspective, the use of meme videos leads to higher levels of student engagement in classroom activities. Students were observed to be more active in discussions, more willing to answer questions, and more attentive during the learning process.

A teacher stated:

“Students become more active and confident when meme videos are used. The classroom atmosphere is livelier.” (Teacher)

Observation data further show that students interacted more frequently with both the teacher and their peers during meme-based learning sessions compared to conventional lessons.

5. Meme Videos as a Bridge between Formal Learning and Digital Culture

The findings also indicate that meme videos function as a bridge between formal classroom learning and students’ digital culture. Students perceive Arabic learning as more relevant to their daily lives as social media users.

One student commented:

“It feels like learning Arabic is connected to what we see on Instagram every day.” (Student 4)

This integration enhances the relevance of learning and supports the alignment between pedagogical practices and students’ digital experiences.

Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis, four main findings can be formulated:

1. Educational-humorous meme videos create a more positive and contextual representation of Arabic language learning.
2. Meme-based learning increases students’ interest and engagement in the learning process.
3. Humor functions as an affective stimulus that reduces anxiety and enhances motivation.
4. Meme videos bridge formal classroom learning with students’ digital culture.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that the use of educational–humorous meme videos contribute to a transformation in how Arabic language learning is perceived and experienced by students. Rather than functioning solely as an alternative instructional medium, meme videos reshape the representation of Arabic learning into a more engaging, contextual, and relatable process that aligns with the characteristics of digital-era learners. This transformation reflects not only a pedagogical shift but also a change in the relationship between learners and the subject matter.

From an affective perspective, the findings indicate that humor plays a crucial role in reducing students' anxiety and increasing their motivation to learn Arabic. Students' responses suggest that meme-based learning creates a more relaxed and enjoyable classroom atmosphere, which encourages participation and reduces fear of making mistakes. This supports Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits those positive emotional conditions—such as enjoyment and confidence—facilitate language acquisition by lowering psychological barriers. In this study, humor functions as an affective stimulus that enables students to engage more openly with Arabic language input.

In terms of cognitive processing, the effectiveness of meme videos can be explained through Mayer's Multimedia Learning Theory. The integration of short Arabic texts with meaningful visual representations allows students to process information through both verbal and visual channels, leading to better comprehension and retention. The concise and structured format of meme content also aligns with the cognitive preferences of digital-native learners, who tend to process information more effectively when it is presented in brief and visually rich formats. This suggests that meme-based learning supports not only engagement but also meaningful understanding of language material.

Furthermore, the contextual nature of meme content reflects key principles of constructivist learning theory. According to Piaget and Vygotsky, learning occurs when individuals actively construct knowledge based on their experiences and social interactions. The meme videos analyzed in this study present Arabic language material within familiar contexts, such as classroom situations and daily activities, enabling students to connect new knowledge with their existing experiences. This contextualization helps transform abstract linguistic concepts into meaningful and accessible knowledge.

Compared to previous studies, this research extends the findings of Wijaya and Rismawati (2023) and Fawzani (2023), which emphasize the role of Instagram as a learning medium, by focusing specifically on meme videos as a distinct pedagogical form. While Ibrahim (2024) highlights the role of memes in literacy engagement, this study demonstrates their specific contribution to Arabic language

learning, particularly in integrating affective, cognitive, and contextual dimensions. In line with Batran (2023), this study confirms the motivational potential of memes, while further elaborating on how meme content functions pedagogically in classroom practice.

Another important finding is that meme videos act as a bridge between formal classroom learning and students' digital culture. This bridging function enhances the relevance of Arabic learning, as students perceive the material as connected to their everyday experiences as social media users. This finding suggests that integrating digital culture into pedagogical practices is essential for maintaining students' engagement in contemporary learning environments.

Overall, the findings indicate that educational-humorous meme videos function as a transformative pedagogical tool that integrates affective, cognitive, and social dimensions of learning. This integration supports a shift from teacher-centered approaches toward more learner-centered and contextually relevant learning practices. At the same time, it highlights the importance of adapting instructional strategies to the evolving characteristics of learners in the digital era.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, this study concludes that the use of educational-humorous meme videos from the Instagram account @Qawla.id plays a significant role in enhancing students' interest in learning Arabic at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 4 Banyuwangi. The findings show that meme videos do not merely function as alternative instructional media, but also contribute to shaping a new representation of Arabic language learning that is more engaging, contextual, and aligned with the characteristics of digital-native learners. The integration of humor and visual elements has been shown to reduce learning anxiety, create a more enjoyable classroom atmosphere, and increase students' active engagement.

In addition, this study highlights a shift in pedagogical practice from teacher-centered approaches toward more learner-centered and digitally adaptive learning. Meme-based learning serves as a bridge between formal classroom instruction and students' informal digital experiences, thereby enhancing the relevance of Arabic language learning in contemporary contexts. These findings suggest that integrating elements of digital culture into pedagogical design is essential for fostering meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

However, this study is limited to single research setting and focuses on one Instagram account, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study relies on qualitative data and does not measure learning outcomes quantitatively. Therefore, future research is recommended to explore the effectiveness of meme-based learning using experimental or mixed-method approaches, as well as to examine its impact on specific language skills such as vocabulary acquisition and grammar mastery.

Practically, this study recommends that teachers integrate educational-

humorous meme videos as part of their instructional strategies, such as for lesson introductions, reinforcement activities, or discussion triggers. More broadly, this study contributes to the development of Arabic language pedagogy by proposing meme-based learning as an innovative, relevant, and sustainable approach in the digital era

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