



Arish University
Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum and
Instruction



An Instructional Content Based on the Integration of Language and Religion to Develop Components of Awareness of Islamic Culture Among Non-Native Speakers of Arabic

by

Rehab Abdelhamid Atiya Rizq Abdelaziz

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Education

(Specialization: Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Arabic Language and Islamic
Studies)

Supervision

Prof. Dr. Mohamed Ragab Fadlallah

Professor of Curriculum and Methods of Teaching
Arabic Language and Islamic Studies (Emeritus)
Faculty of Education – Arish University

Dr. Sakinah Abdelrazek Shehto

Lecturer of Curriculum and Methods of
Teaching Arabic Language and Islamic
Studies
Faculty of Education – Arish University

Dr. Kamal Taher Mousa Nassef

Assistant Professor of Curriculum and
Methods of Teaching Arabic Language
and Islamic Studies
Faculty of Education – Arish University

Academic Year: 2025

Abstract

The current study aimed to examine the effectiveness of an instructional content based on the integration of language and religion in developing the components of awareness of Islamic culture among learners of Arabic as a foreign language. The sample consisted of 15 learners at the Nile Center for Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers. The research tools included: a list of components of awareness of Islamic culture, a teacher's guide, the educational unit, and a scale measuring awareness of Islamic culture. The researcher administered the scale as a pretest, then taught the components of Islamic cultural awareness through the integrated content, followed by a posttest. The results indicated that the integrated instructional content effectively enhanced learners' awareness of Islamic culture. This confirms the effectiveness of integrating language and religion in instructional content for developing awareness of Islamic culture among non-native Arabic learners.

Keywords: Instructional content design – Integration of language and religion – Islamic culture – Non-native Arabic speakers

Introduction

The Arabic language holds significant importance among world languages, being the language of the Holy Qur'an and a means of communication among Arab peoples. It has gained considerable interest from learners—both Arabs and non-Arabs—coming from various cultural backgrounds, driven by religious and social motives and a desire to understand both its linguistic and cultural depths.

Arabic inherently carries its culture; cultural content cannot be separated from the language. The cultural dimension of any language varies according to the society in which it is taught (Mahmoud Ali, 2017, p. 79).

Thus, learning Arabic by non-native speakers represents a bridge between Arab culture and the diverse cultures of learners. One of the primary goals of language learning is to prepare the learner intellectually, culturally, and linguistically, enabling them to engage with Arab culture and express it in correct Arabic. This capability allows them to connect with society in terms of its culture and Islamic history (Somaya Hassan, 2018, p. 66).

This is supported by both the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and the European Union, which agreed that culture should be the reference framework in language education. They emphasized that instructional content must adopt a cultural curriculum approach and that language programs should aim not only to teach proficiency but also to produce meaningful communication (Quang Can D, 2012, p. 74).

In Muslim communities, the objectives of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers are closely linked to Islamic preaching. These objectives involve using Islamic sciences and the Qur'an as foundational sources for designing cultural content in Arabic textbooks. Islamic cultural content is thus considered a fifth language skill that enriches learners and enhances their awareness of Islamic culture by addressing real-world contexts and their specific needs (Mahmoud Ali, 2017, p. 84).

Islamic culture serves numerous purposes: it enhances learners' intellectual development, helps them understand and practice their religion correctly, shapes distinct Islamic personalities, and fosters accurate scientific awareness of Islam's comprehensive nature. It also corrects misconceptions and lays a scientific foundation for nurturing future generations. Islamic culture explores various systems and concepts of Islam, such as creed, worship, good preaching, ethics, knowledge, economy, and politics, as well as the methods of Islam, its systems, adversaries, and modern ideologies (Ahmed Al-Momani, 2010, p. 23).

Islamic culture is open to other cultures while preserving its religious identity. It gives as much as it receives. It promotes personal growth, justice, equality, love, and brotherhood, and it rejects conflict, injustice, and hatred (Ahmed Abdel-Halim, 2004, p. 216).

It is a unifying factor among Muslim nations, east and west, which all share one set of Islamic teachings that guide collective behavior through clear principles, philosophy, and belief. Islamic culture is a defining marker, with Islam at its core, giving it strength, relevance, and continuity (Ali Abu Ameen, 2009, p. 144).

Islamic culture plays a vital role in protecting non-Arabic-speaking learners from ideological confusion and threats to their intellectual frameworks—especially when these frameworks are weak due to a lack of Arabic knowledge. This can lead to misunderstandings of Islamic culture. Thus, Islamic culture acts as a protective barrier, granting non-native learners intellectual resilience (Mohamed Hassan, 2021, p. 302).

When designing or developing curriculum content, it is essential to ensure it aligns with multiple aspects of society. Content should be designed to reflect global changes in all fields, thus enabling learners to integrate effectively into society. This includes instructional methods and strategies used to deliver content.

Beyond traditional literary integration in curricula, the integrated approach—particularly within scientific fields—has spread rapidly worldwide. Numerous studies and academic theses have explored ways to improve education through integration, fostering creativity and logical thinking (Judat Saadeh & Haifa Hassouna, 2020, p. 261).

The integrative approach removes boundaries between knowledge areas, helping link curricula to learners' environments through multidisciplinary study. This enhances connections between learned and new concepts, empowering learners to apply their knowledge to real-world problems. Integration makes learning experiences a fundamental part of the learner (Daryanto, Thematic Learning, 2014, p. 97).

Yakman's study (2012, p. 1078) found that applying integration helped learners enhance language skills and think critically by connecting concepts across disciplines.

Research Problem:

The research problem was identified as the weakness of the components of Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic language learners. Therefore, to address this problem, this research attempted to answer the following main question:

"What is the effectiveness of educational content based on the integration of language and religion in developing the components of Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic language learners?"

The following questions branch out from the main question:

1- What are the components of Islamic cultural awareness that must be developed among non-native Arabic language learners?

2- How can educational content based on the integration of language and religion be designed appropriately for non-native Arabic language learners?

3- What is the effectiveness of educational content based on the integration of language and religion in developing Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic language learners?

Search terms:

1- Educational content based on the integration of language and religion:

Rushdi Ta'ima (1989, 31) defined educational content as "one of the elements of the educational curriculum and the first to be influenced by the goals the curriculum aims to achieve. Educational content refers to the sum of educational experiences, information, and facts provided to learners with the aim of achieving comprehensive, integrated growth in light of the established curriculum objectives."

The researcher defines educational content based on the integration of language and religion procedurally as: the integration of different linguistic skills and concepts with some knowledge of Islamic culture that is needed by non-native Arabic language learners through the design of integrated, multidisciplinary content (linguistic and religious).

2- Awareness of Islamic Culture:

Islamic culture is defined as "comprehensive knowledge of everything related to the Islamic religion, including its principles, values, ethics, rulings, goals, and behaviors, as well as everything related to Muslims in the past and present" (Rania Al-Sakhawi, 2021, 58).

It is operationally defined as "the ability of a non-native Arabic language learner to gain a deep and accurate understanding of a set of knowledge and concepts related to contemporary issues of Islamic culture."

Research Objective:

The current research sought to develop awareness of Islamic culture.

Research Limits:

The current research adhered to the following limits:

1- Human Limits: A group of advanced-level non-native Arabic language learners, given the need for students at this level to develop awareness of Islamic culture.

2- Spatial Limits: The Nile Center for Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers in Nasr City, Cairo.

3- Temporal Limits: The year 2024 AD

4- Thematic Limits:

- Some components of Islamic cultural awareness required for non-native Arabic speakers at the advanced level, as identified by literature, previous studies, and specialized experts.
- Various educational activities based on Islamic cultural knowledge appropriate for non-native Arabic learners.

Research Methodology:

The current study followed a quasi-experimental research approach (single-group design). The researcher attributes this to the lack of a control group, which is difficult to find. This design is sufficient to gain an idea of the effectiveness of the educational content.

Research Tools:

The following tools were used in the research procedures:

1. Data Collection Tools:

A. A list of Islamic cultural awareness components required for non-native Arabic learners.

D. A scale of Islamic cultural awareness required for non-native Arabic learners.

2. Experimental Processing Tools, including:

2- Experimental processing tools, including:

A. Educational content based on the integration of language and religion to develop the components of Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic learners.

B. Teacher's guide for implementing educational content based on the integration of language and religion in Arabic language teaching centers for non-native speakers.

Research procedures:

To achieve its objectives and answer the aforementioned questions, the research followed the following procedures:

To answer the first question:

1- What are the components of Islamic cultural awareness required for non-native Arabic language learners?

The researcher followed the following steps:

A. Preparing a list of the components of Islamic cultural awareness required for non-native Arabic language learners by:

- Reviewing previous literature and studies that addressed Islamic culture.
- Review previous studies and research in the field of Islamic culture, and benefit from their findings and recommendations.
- Develop a preliminary list of components.
- Present the list to a panel of judges, including professors of Islamic studies, curricula, and teaching methods of the Arabic language and Islamic studies, to determine its validity.
- Identify the necessary skills that have received an approval rate of 80% or more from the judges.
- Finalize the list.

To answer the third question:

3- How can educational content based on the integration of language and religion be designed appropriately for non-native Arabic learners?

The researcher followed the following steps:

A. Reviewing approaches to educational content design and utilizing them to derive the foundations of content design in general.

B. Studying the integration approach to understand how to design content in light of it.

c. Design educational content based on the integration of language and religion by following the following steps:

- Study previous research, studies, and literature related to the integration of language and religion.
- Study previous research and studies that addressed purposeful teaching to develop awareness of Islamic culture.
- Present the educational content (educational unit) to referees specialized in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers to determine its suitability for implementation.

To answer the fourth question:

4- What is the effectiveness of educational content based on the integration of language and religion in developing awareness of Islamic culture among non-native Arabic learners?

A. The researcher followed the following steps:

- Developing a scale to develop awareness of Islamic culture among non-native Arabic learners.
- Presenting the scale to the referees to determine its validity.
- Pre-application of the scale to the research group.
- Teaching using educational content based on the integration of language and religion to develop the components of Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic learners.
- Post-test application of the Islamic cultural awareness scale to the research group.
- Data collection and statistical processing.
- Presentation, discussion, and interpretation of the experimental research results.
- Proposals and recommendations based on the research findings.

Statistical Processes Used:

After the research procedures were applied in the field, the experimental data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to process the current research results, which are:

A. Calculating the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the experimental group's scores on the Islamic Culture Awareness Scale in the application (pre- and post-test).

b. Calculating a t-test to determine the differences between students in the experimental group on the Islamic cultural awareness scale in the pre- and post-tests.

Importance of the Research:

1. From a theoretical perspective, the current research can be useful in:

a. Identifying some components of Islamic cultural awareness and the foundations for developing it among non-native Arabic language learners.

C. Providing educational content based on the integration of language and religion to develop the components of Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic language learners.

E. Providing a scale of Islamic cultural awareness among non-native Arabic language learners.

2. From a practical perspective, the research may benefit the following groups:

A. Non-native Arabic language learners in:

- Helping them develop their awareness of Islamic culture.

B. Arabic language teachers for non-native speakers:

- The possibility of using educational content based on the integration of language and religion as a teaching model that may help them develop their teaching.

- The possibility of using the Islamic culture awareness scale to determine the level of awareness of non-native Arabic language learners.

C. Researchers interested in the field:

- The current research could open the way for other research in the field of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, with an integration between language and religion.

Research Results:

To answer the questions, the research sought to verify the validity of the following hypothesis:

There are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the average scores of the study group students in the pre- and post-tests of the Islamic Culture Awareness Scale after teaching using educational content based on the integration of language and religion, indicating the validity of the post-test.

To test and verify this hypothesis, the t-value was calculated to indicate the significance of the differences between two related means between the mean scores of the study group students in the pre- and post-applications of the Islamic Culture Awareness Scale, using the SPSS statistical analysis program. The effect size was also calculated by finding the Eta square coefficient (η^2), using the Haridy statistical analysis program to calculate the effectiveness and effect size H-EESC.

The results are as shown in the following table:

Results of the t-test for the significance of the difference between the mean scores of the study group students in the pre- and post-applications of the Islamic Culture Awareness Scale (n = 15)

Component	Measurement	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-test			Eta-squared (η^2) test for effect size	
				Value	Significance	Result	Value	Effect Size
Religious Component	Pre-test	3.87	1.246	5.739	< 0.001	Significant	0.702	Significant
	Post-test	5.2.	1.082					
Social Component	Pre-test	3.80	1.014	5.957	< 0.001	Significant	0.717	Significant
	Post-test	5.20	0.676					
Cultural and Intellectual Issues Component	Pre-test	4.33	1.113	7.341	< 0.001	Significant	0.794	Significant
	Post-test	6.47	0.516					
Overall Awareness of Islamic Culture	Pre-test	12.00	1.890	9.621	< 0.001	Significant	0.869	Significant
	Post-test	16.87	1.457					

It is clear from the previous table that all values of (t) are significant at a significance level less than 0.001, which indicates the presence of statistically significant differences between the scores of the study group students in the pre- and post-applications of the Islamic Culture Awareness Scale, and this difference is in favor of the post-measurement.

The table also shows that the resulting effect size is large, demonstrating the strength of the impact of teaching using educational content based on the integration of language and religion in developing students' awareness of Islamic culture.

Interpretation of the results of the second hypothesis:

From the previous presentation of the results of each main component of the current research, the following is evident:

- There is a difference between these components in terms of the amount of growth in these components among non-native Arabic language learners at the advanced level - the research group - after they have undergone the teaching of educational content based on the integration of language and religion.

The components of awareness of Islamic culture came in second place after grammatical comprehension skills, as the arithmetic mean for them in the post-application of the scale was (16.87) with a standard deviation of (1.457). The highest component that falls under this part was the component of cultural and intellectual issues.

This may be due to some scholars' difficulty interacting with texts of a traditional religious nature compared to texts that address contemporary issues, which has impacted the development of other components.

Discussion of the results of the main components of awareness of Islamic culture:

- The primary components of Islamic cultural awareness varied in terms of the extent to which each was developed after learners were trained using the integrated content that combines language and religion. The Cultural and Intellectual Issues Component ranked first, which may be attributed to the attractiveness and modernity of the topics. Learners expressed the importance of these issues as they relate to daily life and cultural identity, which enhances their engagement with the content. The Social Component came second, likely due to the relevance of social issues to the practical aspects of daily life, such as social relationships, community values, and civic participation. This real-life connection could serve as a strong motivator for learners to better understand these topics, in addition to the content's variety and the provision of appropriate feedback and assessment. The Religious Component came third, possibly because it was covered more modestly in the educational content compared to cultural, intellectual, and social topics. If the lessons on religious topics are less dynamic or updated, this might affect learners' interest and comprehension levels.
- The researcher attributes this variation to the learners' interests in the content topics. Learners expressed greater appreciation for the themes related to the Cultural and Intellectual Issues Component due to their modernity, which made

them more engaging and enriching, thereby enhancing the learner's understanding and willingness to study these topics more than the social and religious components.

Accordingly, these results answer the fifth research question, as the findings demonstrate that instruction based on integrated educational content—linking language and religion—is reasonably effective in enhancing Islamic cultural awareness among Arabic language learners who are non-native speakers (the study group). This effectiveness applies across all components, the total of the main components, and the overall Islamic cultural awareness in the post-test application.

The results of the Islamic Cultural Awareness Scale confirm the validity of the hypothesis which stated:

There are statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the mean scores of the study group in the pre-test and post-test applications of the Islamic cultural awareness scale, in favor of the post-test.

This means that instruction using content that integrates language and religion has proven effective in enhancing Islamic cultural awareness among the learners in the study group.

The present research attributes the success and effectiveness of the integrated educational content in developing Islamic cultural awareness to several key factors, most notably:

- The integrated content included various components of Islamic culture, encompassing ethical, religious, and social values, as well as contemporary issues that captured learners' interest. These components provided learners with new, diverse knowledge that enriched their understanding, experiences, and personal interests

The enthusiasm of the learners during instruction, their eagerness to participate in activities, their commitment to reading Islamic cultural texts, and their desire to learn more about Islamic culture, along with training them to self-assess and improve their performance, led to their better understanding of the texts and an increase in their linguistic vocabulary.

The topics of Islamic culture and the activities within the lessons contributed to the effectiveness of the integrated educational content and the development of Islamic cultural awareness among advanced-level learners. This is because the content addressed the learners' needs and interests in exploring more components and issues of Islamic culture, thus enhancing their knowledge of Islamic values and teachings

This result aligns with the findings of several previous studies, such as Al-Maliki (2012), Mahmoud Ali (2017), and Aref Al-Osaimi (2021), which examined the impact of programs and strategies in developing Islamic cultural awareness. This reinforces the findings of the current research, which demonstrated the effectiveness of integrated educational content combining language and religion in enhancing Islamic cultural awareness.

Research Recommendations:

Based on the research findings and their practical application, the current study recommends the following:

1. For Arabic language teachers of non-native speakers:
 - a. Adopt integrated curricula that combine Arabic language teaching with Islamic cultural components, as they have a positive impact on learner engagement and comprehension.
 - b. Use interactive teaching strategies, such as group discussions and collaborative activities, to enhance learners' understanding of cultural content.
2. For Arabic language learning centers for non-native speakers:
 - a. Organize workshops and training courses for teachers on methods of implementing integrated education and teaching Islamic culture in a way that suits learners from diverse cultural backgrounds.
 - b. Provide a supportive learning environment that encourages regular attendance and active participation.
 - c. Learning centers should consider the cultural diversity of learners and present content in a way that accommodates their differences, thus creating a learning environment that respects and embraces diversity.
3. For curriculum designers:
 - a. Take cultural diversity into account when designing content, ensuring that it is engaging and inclusive, and promotes respect and appreciation for cultural diversity in Arabic-speaking communities.
 - b. It is recommended to include assessment tools that allow for measuring progress in language skills and cultural understanding, helping to provide feedback to both teachers and learners on achieving educational goals.
 - c. Develop textbooks for non-native Arabic speakers that address contemporary cultural issues and correct misconceptions.

4. For researchers interested in the field:

a. The study recommends conducting further research on the effectiveness of curricula that integrate Arabic language teaching with Islamic cultural concepts and enhancing cultural awareness among learners.

Suggestions for Future Research:

In continuation of the current study's findings and recommendations, the researcher proposes the following future studies:

Investigating the effectiveness of a proposed integrated program in developing awareness of ethical values among non-native Arabic learners.

Evaluating Arabic language textbooks for non-native speakers in light of Islamic culture components and language

References

- Ahmed Mohamed Al-Momani. (2010). Islamic Culture: Contemporary Studies and Concepts. Majdalawi Publishing and Distribution House. Amman, Jordan. [Link](#)
- Ali Abu Amied. (2009). Islamic Culture Between Authenticity and Modernity. *Journal of the Faculty of Arts*, Issue 9, pp. 141 – 166.
- Mahmoud El-Sharkawy Ali. (2017). Language and Culture in the Arabic Language Teaching Program for Non-Native Speakers: A Linguistic Study in the Light of Applied Linguistics. *Journal of the Faculty of Arts: Sohag University, Faculty of Arts*, Issue 44, Vol. 2, pp. 75 – 122.
- Rushdi Ahmed Taima. (1985). A Practical Guide for Preparing Educational Materials for the Arabic Language Teaching Program. Mecca: Umm Al-Qura University, Institute of Arabic Language.
- Abdulrahman Al-Maliki. (2012). Modern Trends in Teaching Islamic Education as Addressed by Educational Research in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, and the Arab World. *Journal of Education and Psychology*. Issue 39. King Saud University. Saudi Association for Educational and Psychological Sciences. pp. 89-125
- Ahmed El-Mahdi Abdelhalim. (2004). Islamic Culture as a Core Subject in Educational Curricula. Al-Shorouk International Library. Cairo.

- Aref Bin Shujan Al-Osaimi. (2021). The Role of Arabic Language Teaching Institutes for Non-Native Speakers at Saudi Universities in Teaching Arabic and Spreading Islamic Culture: The Arabic Language Teaching Institute for Non-Native Speakers at Umm Al-Qura University as a Model. *Journal of Reading and Knowledge: Ain Shams University, Faculty of Education, Egyptian Association for Reading and Knowledge*, Issue 231, pp. 15 – 43.

- Daryanto, (2014) Pembelajaran Tematik, Terpadu, Terintegrasi, (Yogya-karta: Gava Media).

- Joudat Ahmed Saada, and Haifa Adnan Hassouna. (2020). Teaching the Socialization Curriculum to Third-Grade Female Students Using the STEAM Approach and Its Impact on Developing Their Aesthetic Sense. *International Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences: Arab Foundation for Scientific Research and Human Development*, Issue 35, pp. 258 – 290.

- Mohamed Mustafa Hassan. (2021). An Islamic Culture-Based Program for Correcting Cultural Concepts Among Non-Native Speakers of Arabic. *Research Journal: Ain Shams University, Faculty of Arts, Girls College of Arts, Sciences, and Education*, Issue 5, Vol. 2, pp. 292 – 316.

- Prastowo, Andi. (2019) Analisis Pembelajaran Tematik Terpadu, (Jakarta: Kencana). Sukmadinata, Nana Syaodih dan Erliana Syaodih

- Rania Mahmoud Al-Sakhawi. (2021). Challenges of Islamic Culture in the Age of Modern Technology. *Arab Journal of Islamic and Sharia Studies*, 5(16), pp. 53-70.

- Sumaya Saad Hassan. (2018). Teaching Islamic Studies to Non-Native Arabic Speakers: Curriculum and Issues: An Applied Study. *Al-Alsun Journal: Series in Literary and Linguistic Studies: Ain Shams University, Faculty of Al-Alsun*, Issue 34, pp. 64 – 87.

- Yakman, G. (2012). Exploring the exemplary STEAM education in the U.S. as a practical education framework for Korea. *Korea Association Science Education*, 32 (6), PP 1072-1086.