



MOTHER LANGUAGE

Vol.: 10 | Issue: 1 | Page 186-216

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3329/ml.v10i1.91880>



Challenges of Learning Arabic among Adult Learners in Bangladesh: A Quantitative Descriptive Study

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Article Info	Abstract
<i>Article History</i> Date of Submission 29-01-2026 Date of Acceptance 06-05-2026 Date of Publication 15-06-2026	Bangladesh has a close historical relationship with the Arabic language, mainly due to its religious significance. However, in the contemporary global context, the importance of Arabic is no longer limited to religious matters; it has become increasingly significant in the fields of international relations and economic activities. In Bangladesh, there are primarily two education systems: 1. The general education system, where Arabic is absent in the curriculum. 2. The Madrasah education system, where Arabic is mandatory. That's why students in general education systems often lack Arabic language skills. However, for students in the general education system, learning Arabic is limited to the various courses offered by university institutes, despite the growing demand. Since 2016, there has been a significant increase in the demand to learn Arabic among general educated adult learners, because some private institutes started the Arabic Language Courses for adults and successfully commercialized them. These adult learners, whether pursuing graduation or employed individuals, face numerous challenges in learning Arabic, including both non-linguistic and linguistic challenges. The study was conducted with 200 learners. Based on the goal
<i>Keywords</i> Arabic, Bangladesh, Adult learners, Approaches, Challenges, Solutions	

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of improving the educational experience of adult learners of Arabic in Bangladesh, this study adopts a descriptive and quantitative approach to pinpoint the challenges that they face and resolve them.

Introduction

Arabic is one of the most prominent languages of the modern era. Arabic also holds significant importance in Bangladesh. People in Bangladesh learn Arabic for religious purposes, to develop language skills, and for employment opportunities in the Middle East. People from general background learn Arabic either from a religious perspective or from the perspective of language skill development. Generally, they learn Arabic from different online and offline courses offered by different university language institutes or private language institutes. Besides government institutes, there are dedicated private institutes for teaching Arabic; however, they are insufficient to meet the demand. A large number of people in our population come from a general education background, and they did not have the opportunity to learn Arabic in school. Consequently, an increasing number of grown-ups are trying to learn Arabic after completing their schooling. Adult language learners face more challenges when beginning the study of a linguistically distant language like Arabic at a later stage in life (Ellis, R., 2008). In most cases, these challenges are acknowledged neither by the learners nor the instructors. As a result, when the learners step forward to learn, most of them don't meet their expectations, and in most cases, they cannot adapt to the steps of growing skills in Arabic. Despite growing demand for Arabic among adult learners in Bangladesh, limited empirical research has been conducted to identify their linguistic and non-linguistic challenges and solve them. That is why it is important to sort out the issues and find the solutions. This study will emphasize both the discussion of the challenges and the proposed solutions related to them.

Literature Review

Some Bangladeshi researchers have generally discussed the common scenario of Arabic language teaching in Bangladesh. Haque (2016)

conducted a case study of some selected Bangladeshi institutes and revealed that Arabic teaching is widely plugged with grammar and classical texts without paying attention to the communicative four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Chowdhury (2017) also found a gap between language teaching methodologies and actual classroom environments in Bangladesh and revealed that the grammar-translation method is widely used in teaching and content, which limits learners' ability to achieve communicative competence in Arabic, ultimately hindering their proficiency and practical use of the language in real-life situations.

Hasan (2020) conducted a critical analysis of Arabic language teaching in Bangladesh, emphasizing that teachers frequently lack formal training in second-language learning and that reliance on traditional madrasah-oriented resources fails to meet the needs of modern adult learners seeking functional proficiency. Rahman and Khatun (2019) similarly found that teachers and students in Bangladeshi Arabic programs expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the existing learning materials, highlighting a lack of resources that cohesively integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing within a unified pedagogical framework. Rashid and Aziz (2018) also got similar findings, indicating that both teachers' and students' perceptions revealed a structural dissonance between educational objectives and course design. Rahman and Khatun (2019) found that both teachers and learners in Arabic courses in Bangladesh reported significant dissatisfaction with the existing learning materials and a shortage of resources that include all four skills. Sayeed (2019) also concluded that the growing demand for Arabic is not yet matched due to an insufficient institutional response and a crowded curriculum in structurally unsupportive environments.

In terms of challenges, methods, learning purposes, and motivation, there are differences between language learning in childhood and in adulthood (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 2015). The teaching method and the instructor are important for teaching adult learners a

language. If these two aspects are not adequately coordinated, learners may experience disappointment, hindering their ability to learn the language according to their needs and expectations, and in some cases, they may discontinue their language learning.

Despite all this research, the research field does not adequately address the challenges of learning Arabic among adults in the Bangladeshi context, in classroom environments, outside classroom environments, and teaching techniques. Most researchers focused on the internal challenges faced by common learners of all ages, but they did not specify the challenges encountered by adults, particularly their external challenges, which significantly hindered their ability to complete Arabic language learning effectively. Therefore, based on the factors mentioned above, a clear research gap has been identified that specifically addresses the challenges faced by adult learners. The research has been conducted using a quantitative and descriptive approach, incorporating responses from adult learners who completed questionnaires.

Research Questions

Considering the objectives of this study, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What external challenges do adult learners face in learning the Arabic language that impact their learning process?
2. What are the internal challenges faced by adult learners in learning Arabic that are often overlooked due to a lack of awareness and inefficiency of authorities and instructors?
3. How do the structure of language classrooms, pedagogical approaches, and language learning environments influence the development of effective Arabic learning and the motivation of learners?
4. What are the recommendations for addressing these various challenges faced by adult learners in terms of curriculum and

teaching methods, and what factors can help improve their language learning outcomes?

Theoretical Framework

This research was conducted through several integrated theoretical frameworks, such as Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles, and Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy). These theories address how adult learners acquire a foreign language and how to develop language learning skills. Considering the general educated society and the context of Bangladesh, what are the challenges they face?

Methodology

Research Design

This research employed descriptive and quantitative methodologies to discuss and examine the challenges encountered by adult learners. Adult learners typically face two categories of problems: non-linguistic challenges and linguistic challenges. This study has identified problems and offered various solutions and approaches to solve them.

Data Collection Instruments

To validate the study, the data were collected using the following methods:

- 1. Questionnaire:** First of all, some probable challenges facing adult learners in Bangladesh were identified by the learners and instructors of Arabic language courses. After the final exams of their courses, learners' feedback was collected via a Google Form that included multiple-choice, linear scale questions (a five-point Likert was used to examine participants' answers, where 1 =Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5 =Strongly Agree), and some long questions. The questionnaire focuses on the challenges of all four linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing),

language teaching methods, different linguistic difficulties, and diverse external challenges that affect their learning experience. The complete questionnaire is available in **Appendix A**, and the corresponding response data are accessible in **Appendix B**.

- 2. Classroom Observation:** Some challenges were listed by the instructors who experienced the challenges in the environments of the classroom and the interactions between them and learners while conducting their courses.
- 3. Informal Feedback:** While the courses are ongoing, informal comments from learners, along with their personal interactions and consultations with instructors, also contribute to this study by identifying the challenges that enhance the study's data.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to look at the quantitative data from the questionnaires. Thematic analysis was employed to examine qualitative data from observations and feedback, aiming to identify trends and provide in-depth explanations for the challenges faced by learners.

Participants

This study comprised 200 adult learners from a general educational background who had not formally studied the Arabic language in their school. The adult learners were categorized into two groups.

Offline Group: This group comprised 100 learners from 4 offline batches at the Institute of Modern Languages, University of Dhaka.

The online group consisted of 100 learners from 4 batches at Sibawayh Institute, one of the leading online Arabic learning institutions in Bangladesh.

All participants in the study were 18 years of age or older. The adult learners comprised undergraduate students, postgraduate

students, and employed professionals. Variations in age, occupation, and motivations for acquiring the Arabic language were identified among these learners, intensifying the challenges they encountered in learning Arabic.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Participants (N = 200)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mode of Study	Offline (IML, DU)	100	50
	Online (Sibawayh Institute)	100	50
Type of Students	Students	127	63.5
	Employed	51	25.5
	Self-Employed	22	11
Age Group	18 - 25 years	103	51.5
	26 - 35 years	51	25.5
	36 - 45 years	27	13.5
	Above 45 years	19	9.5
Educational Back-ground	General Education	200	100

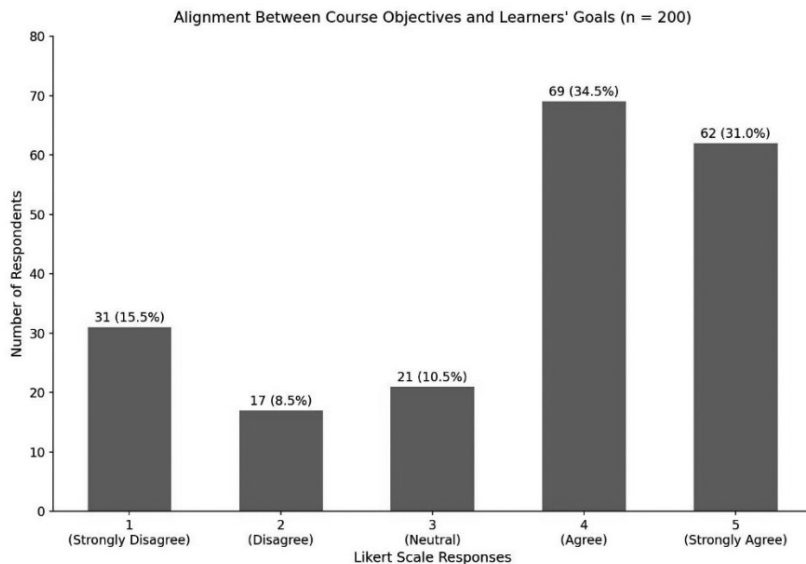
Types of Challenges

The challenges can be divided into two categories:

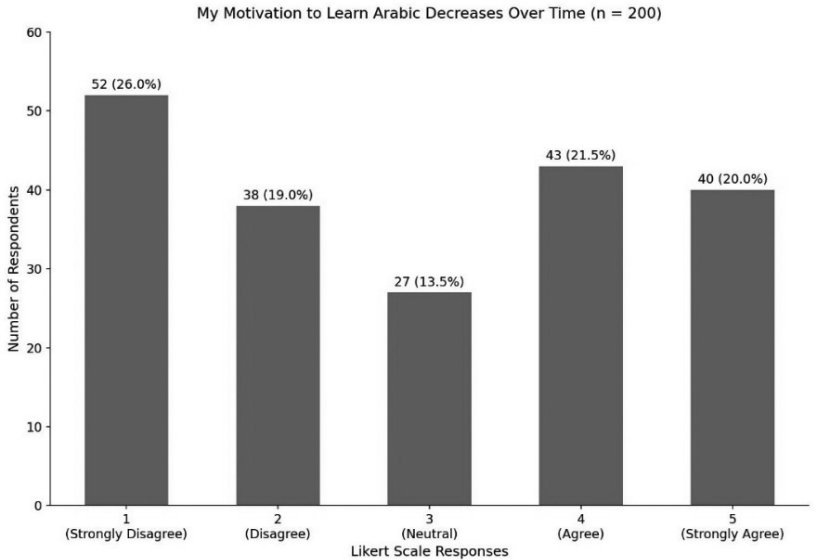
1. Challenges that are not directly related to the Arabic language but affect learning.
2. Challenges that are directly related to the Arabic language.

Non-Linguistic Challenges: Let us explore the challenges that, while not directly associated with adults’ learning of the Arabic language, influence it.

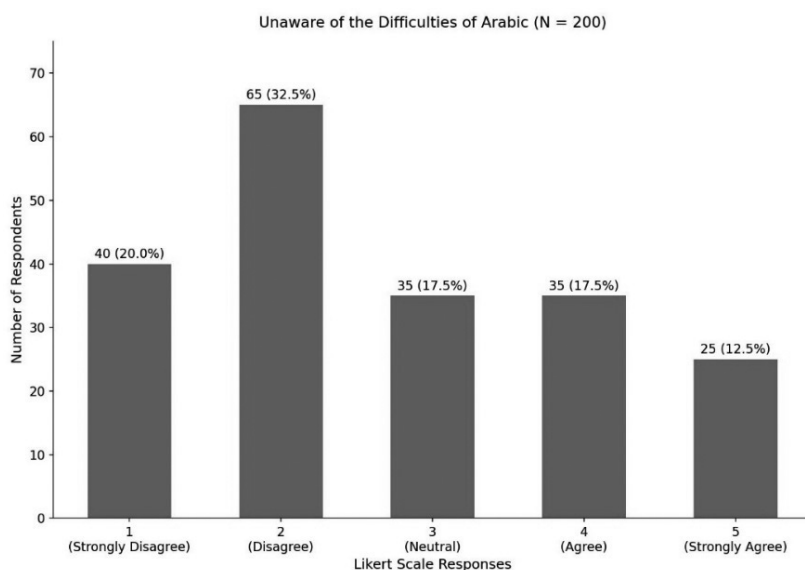
1. Diverse learning objectives of the Arabic language: A learner studies Arabic for various purposes, including skill development, religious studies, or achieving career objectives. When a student comes in with the intention of developing linguistic four skills – listening, speaking, reading, writing- but the course material is structured to teach Arabic as part of religious studies simultaneously, while focusing only on reading skills, the course material does not match the learner’s goals, which causes the learner to become less motivated, encounter difficulties, and achieve subpar results. Teaching Arabic as a religious or classical subject limits students’ communication abilities (Al-Batal, M., 2006). The misalignment between students’ goals and the course books is one of the main obstacles to achieving the expected goals of learning Arabic (Chowdhury, 2017). According to our survey, 131 of 200 (65.5%) adult learners could not find their learning objectives in these courses.



2. Decline of motivation over Time: While learners initially hold significant potential, their motivation frequently declines after a certain period. Several reasons underlie this. Primarily, a major reason for disappointment is unmet expectations. When an adult learner fails to meet expectations or does not see proportional skill growth relative to the number of lessons attended, he perceives that he is not meeting his expected standards. When learners fail to recognize measurable advancement in language proficiency, motivation diminishes quickly (Dörnyei, Z., 2001). Furthermore, as the learner observes tangible progress, he will gain confidence in his abilities, hence increasing his desire to master this noble language. Conversely, the learner will get disinterested in the absence of observable progress and skill development over time. In such a situation, the learner becomes disappointed, and he finally drops out. According to our survey, 83 of 200 adult learners acknowledged that their motivation to learn Arabic decreases over time.

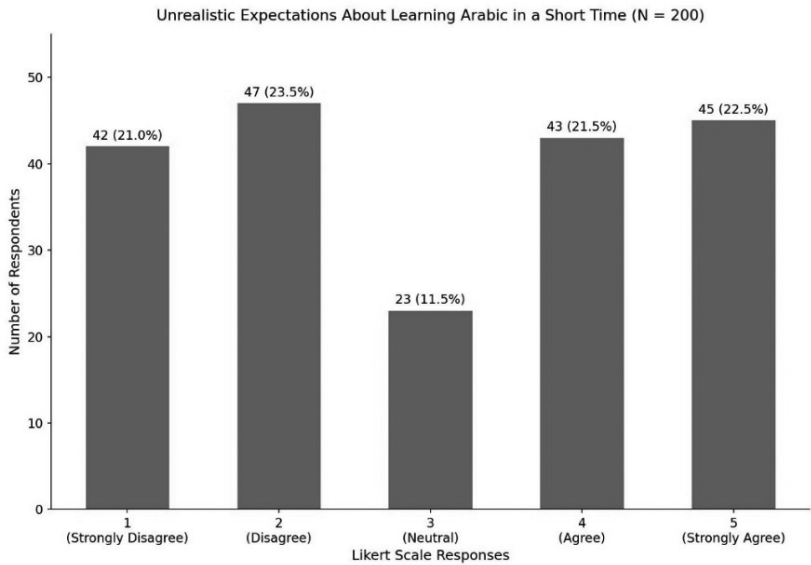


3. Unaware of the difficulties of Arabic: In Bangladesh, people acquire the experience of learning a foreign language initially through English, since learning English is compulsory in the government curriculum. When it comes to learn Arabic as a foreign language, people often compare it to English. They believe that learning Arabic is equally as easy as learning English. In terms of vocabulary, syntax, and the structure of sentences, Arabic is significantly more enriched and complicated than English. At this point, some learners become demotivated when they come up with the belief that learning Arabic is as easy as learning English, which further discourages them to learn Arabic. According to our survey, 105 out of 200 adult learners (52%) acknowledged that they were unaware of the difficulties of Arabic.

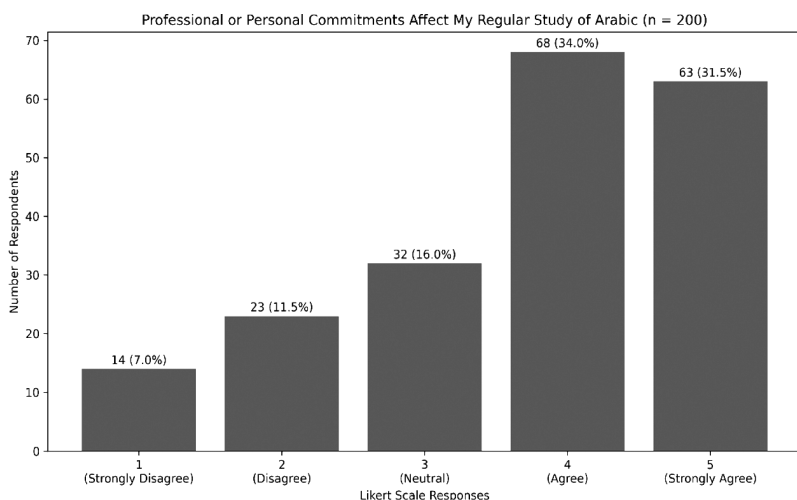


4. Unrealistic expectations in a short time limit: Adult Learners, once finishing the elementary level of the language, frequently expect to comprehend Arabic media and the lectures of Arab scholars, or to understand holy texts such as the Quran and Hadith within a short timeframe. Unfortunately, they don't know that they are required to achieve at least an intermediate or advanced level of proficiency in

the language to meet those expectations. Having merely fundamental knowledge will be insufficient to fulfill such expectations. Consequently, in many cases, once they finish the primary level, they are unable to fulfill their expectations, resulting in frustration and discontinuance. According to our survey, 87 of 200 learners had unrealistic expectations about learning Arabic in a short time.

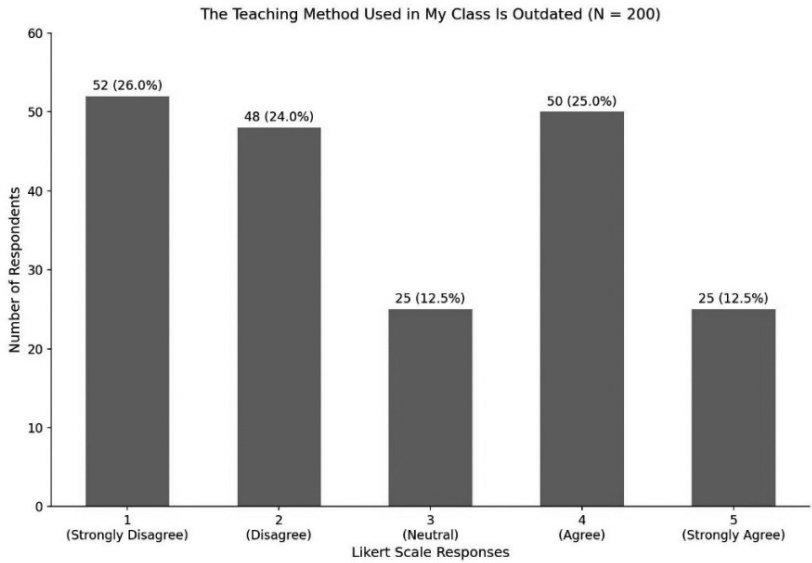


5. Lack of priority: To acquire proficiency in Arabic, learners must dedicate a minimum amount of time to the study of the Arabic language. Achieving proficiency in the Arabic language is extremely challenging without daily study and consistent practice. Due to an imbalance between professional and personal commitments, adult learners often fail to prioritize Arabic learning. Inconsistency will lead to unsatisfactory progress. Our survey data indicates that 131 out of 200 (65.5%) respondents experienced less consistency in learning Arabic due to their professional and personal obligations.

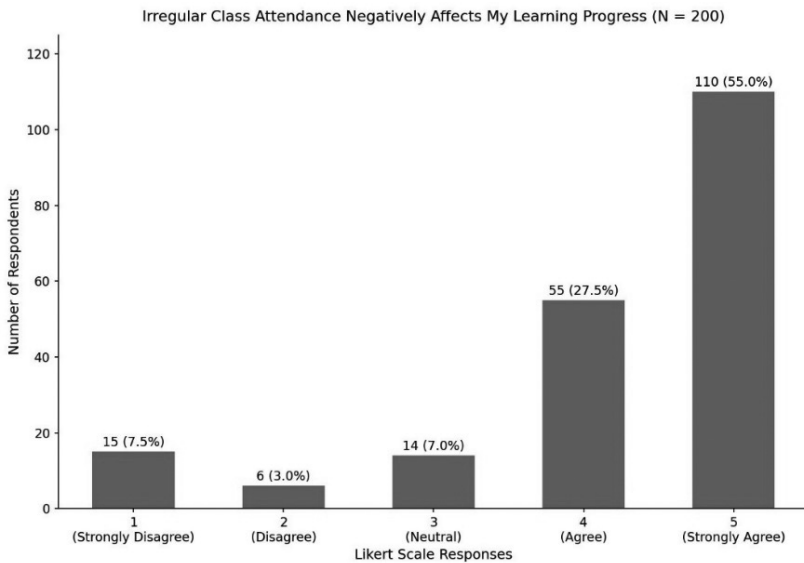


6. Use of outdated teaching methods and madrasah-oriented materials: Adult learners who want to learn Arabic sometimes commence with a grammar-focused book before engaging with skill-development-oriented resources. They prioritize grammar books excessively, neglecting the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills by studying disorganized and unnecessary grammatical rules initially. This makes Arabic challenging and discouraging for primary-level learners. In Bangladesh, most of the institutions still follow the traditional grammar-translation method as a medium of teaching Arabic. This is not a modern approach at all. Using modern methods reduces the time and effort. One of the significant tools for learning a language is the use of resources and materials. Besides the main language book, an institute should provide the students with some ideal and effective content for practice purposes outside of the classes. Unfortunately, here in Bangladesh, there is a shortage of comprehensive Arabic learning materials that integrate all four language skills, making effective learning difficult. Because

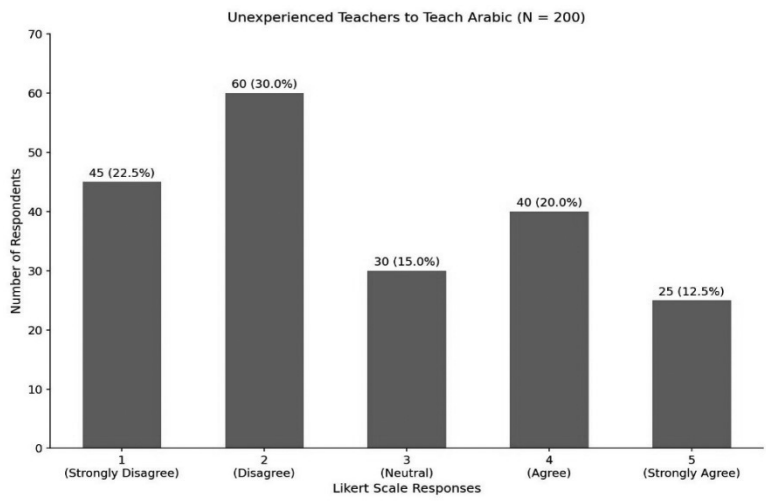
of this, in Bangladesh, neither teaching nor learning Arabic is that effective. Haque (2016) also found in a case study of some selected Bangladeshi institutes and revealed that Arabic teaching is widely plugged with grammar and classical texts without paying attention to the communicative four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to our survey, 100 out of 200 (50%) adult learners acknowledged that the teaching method and learning materials used in their classes are outdated.



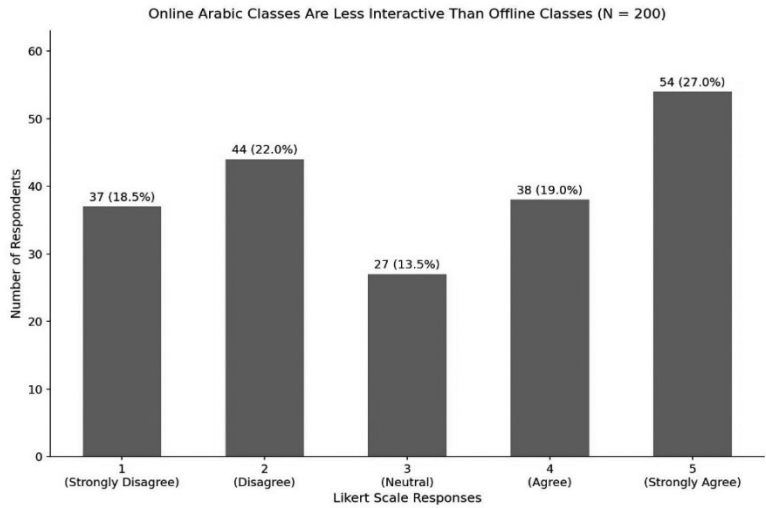
7. Irregularity in attendance: Attending each of the classes for learning Arabic is mandatory. This is because Arabic lessons are highly interconnected. This means that the content of the next class is linked to what was covered in previous classes. So, if learners miss the third class, they will likely misunderstand the fourth class. Missing classes disrupts understanding and slows progress. Our survey data indicates that 165 out of 200 (83.5%) adult learners acknowledged that Irregular class attendance negatively affects their learning progress.



8. Unexperienced teachers to teach Arabic: When adult learners begin their Arabic learning with an inexperienced teacher, they encounter challenges. The majority of Arabic language teachers in Bangladesh lack the necessary training in second language teaching methods and techniques. The majority of them teach their students using the outdated grammar-translation method, when numerous methods for learning a second language and modern Arabic language materials have already been developed. Hamid and Rahman (2021) pointed out that Arabic instructors are burdened with delivering a detailed curriculum while receiving inadequate training and professional assistance. Some teachers make an effort to provide content for their students. However, they frequently fail to keep the qualities, chronological approach, and characteristics that a modern language book should have because of a lack of expertise in developing content for Arabic language learners. Our questionnaire reveals that 125 out of 200 adult learners (62.5%) think their course teachers lack the necessary training to teach Arabic.

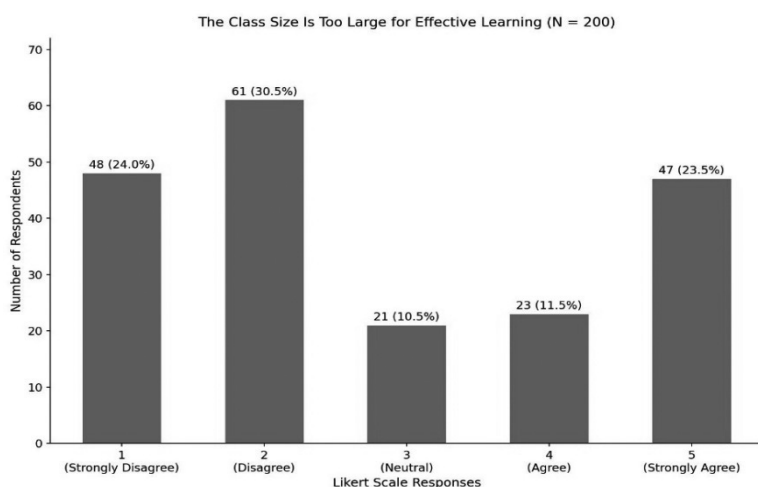


9. Challenges in both online and offline classes: In Bangladesh, although the offline teaching method for Arabic was well-known and familiar, the COVID-19 pandemic has led both teachers and learners to significantly shift to online teaching methods. In physical classes, challenges include that people in busy cities cannot attend on time every day due to heavy traffic, or they must allocate extra time to ensure they arrive punctually despite the traffic.

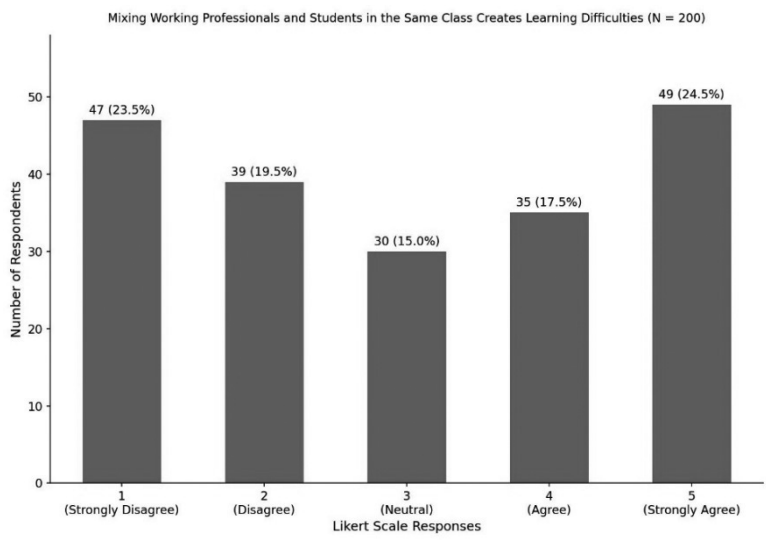


These factors lead to the waste of a lot of time, which is hard for students and service holders. They lost interest as a result. Regarding these issues, online classes are better. But there are some cons, too. In online classes, adult learners encounter significant challenges in online environments due to limited engagement and less instant feedback (Hassani, M., & Al-Momani, F., 2020). In some cases, the teachers do not understand the use of electronic devices. Therefore, if the teacher is not skilled enough regarding interaction in class and understanding the use of devices, we cannot expect a satisfactory output in online classes. Our survey data indicates that 92 out of 200 (46%) adult learners acknowledged that their online Arabic classes are less interactive than physical classes.

10. Overcrowded classrooms: The standard size of classes of the Arabic language is 20-24 students. But in Bangladesh, most of the institutes do not follow this standard; rather, they reserve one teacher for 50–80 students. The teacher can't provide equal time to each student, and the students can't show their performance to the teacher. Because of the many students, teachers cannot examine homework attentively and cannot provide them with proper feedback. Large language classes reduce opportunities for interaction, feedback, and individual learner development (Richards, J. C., 2015). Our survey data indicates that 70 out of 200 (35%) adult learners acknowledged that their class size is too large for effective learning.



11. Combining working professionals and students in the same batch: Teaching both working professionals and students in the same batch causes certain challenges. For instance, employed individuals usually stay away from engaging in academic classes or lengthy learning for a long time. They face challenges with the adjustment to conventional classes.



Furthermore, due to their busy schedules and professional commitments, they can hardly complete and submit assignments or homework. Whereas a student stays ahead of the working professionals, as they can give more time and effort comparatively. Consequently, it becomes a challenge to integrate working professionals and students within the same batch. Typically, from this type of batch, most of the time, learners do not come up with satisfactory skills. Our survey data reveals that 84 out of 200 adult learners (41%) faced difficulties because of combining working professionals and students in the same batch.

12. Age Differences: Wide age gaps among learners create challenges in content delivery and classroom interaction. Let’s say a ninth-grade student and an undergraduate are not the same in terms of maturity. In

this case, the level of understanding, questioning the instructor, and the skill of presentation vary a lot from person to person. This can lead to unwarranted pressure on the instructor. It becomes complex for the instructor to create a fine balance in the classroom. According to our survey, there are four age groups in the same batch.

Age Groups (N-200)	Number	Percentage
18 - 25 years	103	51.5
26 - 35 years	51	25.5
36 - 45 years	27	13.5
Above 45 years	19	9.5

Table 2: Major Non-Linguistic Challenges Faced by Adult Learners at a glance

SL	Non-Linguistic Challenges	Number of Students Who were agreed	Agree (%)
1	Dissimilarity between learners' goals and course objectives	131	65.5
2	Decreasing motivation with time	83	41.5
3	Unaware of the difficulties of Arabic	105	52
4	Unrealistic Expectations in a Short Time Limit	88	44
5	Time limitations resulting from professional or academic obligations	131	63.5
6	Irregular class attendance	165	82.5
7	Use of outdated teaching methods & absence of four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)	100	50
8	Overcrowded classrooms	70	35
9	Mixed batches (students & professionals)	84	41
10	Challenges in online classes	92	46
11	Unexperienced teachers to teach Arabic on online	125	62.5

Linguistic Challenges

Let's point out the adult's linguistic challenges.

1. Pronunciation Challenges: The adult learners face different obstacles when they start learning the Arabic language. The challenges faced by them are as follows:

- The Arabic letters that are pronounced from the same area of the mouth pose a challenge for learners when trying to articulate them. Such as:

ظَلَمَ & ذَلَمَ → ظ & ذ
جَبَرَ & زَبَرَ → ج & ز
طَبَرَ & تَبَرَ → ط & ت

- Arabic sounds that do not exist in the learner's native language cause persistent pronunciation difficulties (**Khalil, A., 2010**). There are a few letters in Arabic that need to be pronounced from the throat, the vocal cord, and the depths of the gob. These letters are absent in the Bengali language, which leads to wrong pronunciation by the learners. Such as:

1. ح (Hā') → It is frequently pronounced as “হ” or pronounced weakly, resulting in the actual Arabic that is not heard clearly.
2. ع (‘Ayn) → Often, it is omitted in pronunciation or turns into a “আ” sound.
3. غ (Ghayn) → It is frequently pronounced as “গ” or “ঘ”.

- The Bengali speakers use 40-45 sounds, combining the Bengali vowels and consonants. In contrast, only 28 basic consonants are used in Arabic, and some of these are even absent in Bengali. Such as:

1. Consonants from the deeper throat: ح & ع
2. Consonants from the vocal cord: خ & غ
3. Consonants from the tongue: ض

2. Writing Challenges: Mostly, the adult learners struggle with the handwriting part. The following list includes some of the handwriting issues adults face.

- A. They have difficulties with positioning dots (nuqta) above and below specific letters. They also make mistakes in differentiating between letters with one dot and those with two dots. Often, the dot that should be placed above a letter is incorrectly placed below it, and the dot that should be below a letter is placed above it instead. For example, they write "ب" with one dot above the letter. Due to this error, the letter looks like "ن".
- B. They have Issues with connecting the letters to write a word. In Arabic, some of the letters never connect with the previous or next letter. Those are, ا, د, ذ, ر, ز, و. Some of the learners are unaware of this and make mistakes while writing. Such as: They write the spelling of مَنْصُورٌ (Maṣṣūr) incorrectly, they write مَنْصُورٌ. They write the spelling of وَلِيٍّ (Walī) incorrectly. They write وَلِيٍّ.
- C. Not knowing the difference between rounded ة and wide-shaped ت also leads to spelling mistakes. For example, writing بَيْتٌ instead of بَيْتٌ is incorrect, and writing بَيْتٌ instead of بَيْتٌ is also incorrect.
- D. Students often make mistakes in using long vowels (و, ا, ي), which can lead to spelling errors such as جَمِعةٌ instead of جَمِعةٌ and جَمِلٌ instead of جَمِيلٌ.
- E. Some learners pronounce Arabic words following Bengali pronunciation, and they make mistakes when writing those Arabic words. They often make mistakes with the following letters:
 - ه and ح → The word هِرٌّ is pronounced in Bengali as “হিরকন” and written incorrectly as هِرٌّ.
 - ت and ط → The word طَاعُوْتُ is pronounced in Bengali as “তাওতুন” and written incorrectly as تاَعُوْتُ.

- ص and س → The word سَيِّفٌ is pronounced in Bengali as “সাইফুন” and written incorrectly as صَيِّفٌ.

3. Grammatical Challenges

- A. Arabic grammar is very complex. The plural forms and gender usage of nouns are particularly challenging. Along with grammatical complexities, there is a lack of sufficient practice of grammatical rules. The instructors mostly focus on theoretical Arabic rather than practical, which leads to unfamiliarity with practical and communicative Arabic among learners. For example, one of the common rules to make the plural form of a male noun is to add "ون" after the noun. Such as: موظفون، فلاحون، مسلمون. But this rule does not apply to all male nouns. Some nouns do not follow this rule. Such as: أطباء، شعراء، كُتّاب، إِخوة
- B. In the Bengali and English languages, the ending part of a word in a sentence usually does not change. However, in Arabic sentences, the ending of a word changes based on the subject, object, and verb. This type of change is called الإعراب (i‘rāb—case endings or declension). At the end of a word, there may sometimes be تنوين الفتح (two faṭḥah / faṭḥatayn), تنوين الكسر (two kasrah / kasratayn), or تنوين الضم (two ḍammah / ḍammatayn), and sometimes الفتحة (one faṭḥah), الكسرة (one kasrah), or الضمة (one ḍammah). Along with these, various letters and signs are used to indicate the grammatical position of a word within a sentence. Such a system does not exist in the Bengali language. Moreover, most Arabic books are read without الإعراب (i‘rāb). For this reason, Bengali-speaking adult learners face challenges when learning the Arabic language.
- C. Bangla and English languages are familiar to learners from an early age. The sentence structure for both Bangla and English follows the pattern of subject + verb + object. But Arabic language sentence structure varies context-wise. Sometimes the verb is before the subject and vice versa. For Bangla and English learners, it is difficult to learn and master this structure. For example, the

verb before subject: "أكل خالد التفاح." and the verb after the subject: "خالد أكل التفاح." Both sentences are correct. Sometimes the plural form of subjects makes more complexities in verb conversion.

- D.** The conversion of verbs has limitations in Bangla and English. While verb conversion has limitations in both Bangla and English, Arabic requires studying an entirely different large chapter to understand this concept. This segment appears to be difficult for the learners as well. For example, the verb "فعل" has more than 1500 conversions depending on the number, gender, and person.

4. Challenges Related to Arabic Writing Skill: To express one's thoughts clearly through writing in Arabic, one must first have a practical command of commonly used vocabulary, sentence structure, and spelling, as well as develop writing proficiency on a variety of topics while learning the language. However, in our country, grammatical rules are overemphasized, while writing skills are not given separate emphasis through practical and communicative methods of teaching Arabic. As a result, while many students improve in learning other Arabic language skills, they struggle to write spontaneous compositions, reports, essays, and other Arabic-language applications. This occurs because sufficient writing practice is not conducted along with language learning.

5. Challenges Related to Arabic Reading Skill: Arabic learners need to read a large number of Arabic texts and storybooks according to their level to develop reading skills so that problems related to reading ability do not persist. However, in our country, although language textbooks place heavy emphasis on grammatical rules, they do not include separate texts or passages for reading skill development, nor do they provide comprehension sections. As a result, there is insufficient opportunity to enhance reading skills through various practice activities based on such materials. Moreover, language teachers do not give separate importance to the development of reading skills. Consequently, even after completing different levels of Arabic language study, students fail to achieve the reading proficiency appropriate to those levels.

6. Challenges Related to Arabic Listening and Speaking Skills:

Listening and speaking are frequently the most overlooked skills in Arabic language classrooms, especially in non-Arab contexts (Alosh, M., 2017). For the development of listening and speaking skills, the use of audio materials separately is absent in most language classrooms. Moreover, many educators fail to select level-appropriate and effective books for developing speaking skills. In addition, since many conversation-based books are not accompanied by audio materials, students do not benefit properly from studying those books. Inadequate exposure to audio input in Arabic lessons significantly restricts learners' listening comprehension skills (Alosh, M., 2017). As a result, students face difficulties in appropriately acquiring listening and speaking skills.

7. Vocabulary and Word Meaning challenges: Arabic is a rich and ancient language. The Arabic language has many words, roots, and meanings. Learning Arabic vocabulary is difficult. Learners face many problems in learning Arabic vocabulary. For example:

- A. Arabic has synonyms (مترادف), antonyms (مضاد), and words with multiple meanings (المشترك اللفظي). Learners cannot understand or use these words properly. As a result, vocabulary learning becomes difficult.
- B. The lack of morphological awareness significantly limits learners' capacity to enrich their Arabic vocabulary (Saiegh-Haddad, E., & Henkin-Roitfarb, R., 2014). Many learners do not understand the technique of conversion to the root words from the modified words by eliminating the extra letters or vowels. This phenomenon happens due to the lack of knowledge of Arabic Morphology (علم الصرف). As a result, most of them are not capable enough of searching for the root words of the modified words.
- C. The phonological, morphological, and syntactic differences between Bengali and Arabic are considerable. In their comparative linguistic study, **Akan, Abdul-Rab, and Salafi (2023)** observed notable contrasts in consonant systems, sentence patterns, and grammatical categories.

Table 3: Linguistic Difficulties Reported by the Adult Learners at a glance

SL	Linguistic Area	Major Difficulty Identified by the Adults	Percentage (%)
1	Pronunciation	Pronouncing certain Arabic letters	46
		Arabic sounds that do not exist in Bengali	46
		Transitioning from Qur'anic recitation to spoken	65
2	Listening & Speaking	Insufficient listening practice in my Arabic classes	56
		Limited opportunities to speak Arabic in class	52.5
		Lack of audio/video materials on speaking and listening skills.	61
3	Reading	Insufficient graded reading materials for my level	31
		Struggling to read Arabic texts without vowel marks (ḥarakāt).	59
4	Writing	Writing Arabic letters correctly	37.5
		Making mistakes with dots (nuqṭa) and letter connections	44.5
		Arabic spelling rules (hamzah, long vowels, etc.)	41
5	Grammar	Arabic grammar is more difficult than other languages I know.	52
		Understanding i'rāb (The harakat & tanveen of last words of sentences)	49.5
		Teaching grammar theoretically without sufficient practice	41.5
6	Vocabulary	Learning Arabic vocabulary due to multiple meanings and root forms.	65.5

Recommendations

The discussions mentioned above prove that adult learners face various challenges hindering their learning process. The Arabic language institutes and instructors should focus on these challenges and how

to solve them. To resolve and mitigate the challenges, some effective recommendations are the following:

1. Choosing a suitable teaching method for Bangladeshi adult learners is essential. Their age, language learning objectives, chronological accuracy, duration of learning, and motivation levels must be evaluated holistically to formulate a thorough and effective method. Textbooks should be designed specifically for them according to this strategy. It is not possible to expect effective outcomes if textbooks written using different teaching methods are studied in an uncoordinated manner. Adult learners are self-directed, goal-oriented, and driven by practical outcomes. It is doubtful that teaching strategies that disregard the experiences, objectives, and motivations of students will be successful (Knowles, M. S., Holton, E. F., & Swanson, R. A., 2015). Arabic Language courses in Bangladesh should apply a skill-oriented, learner-centered syllabus and should focus on the communicative needs of adult learners. Chowdhury (2017) and Habib (2018).
2. Language learning institutions should clearly explain the purpose of the course before starting it. Different courses should be designed for varying purposes. To learn Arabic for religious purposes, a learner should not have to learn professional communicative Arabic, or vice versa. Along with the objectives of the course, as much time as necessary should be given to implement these objectives.
3. Language institutes should take several steps to help adults retain their motivation during language courses. Whether they are satisfied with their learning outcomes after each class has to be considered. At the end of each language class, the learners should be asked to consider their learning problems. The learner will be able to maintain his motivation for language acquisition if these tasks are completed successfully.
4. Adult learners in Bangladesh stumble at the beginning because they are not properly aware of the difficulties of Arabic. Therefore, at the beginning of the class, language instructors should clearly

discuss how much time and how many classes will be needed to acquire their expected language skills, and institutes should provide a written outline of the learning topics of every class and its outcomes. We need to make learners aware of the important issues and challenges involved in acquiring language skills. Shohel and Islam (2016) similarly underscored that institutional orientation programs, which clearly communicate the actual timeline, skill progression, and realistic expectations of Arabic learning, are a crucial yet consistently overlooked component of Arabic language education in Bangladesh.

5. The excessive emphasis on grammar in Arabic language teaching should be reduced; the elementary levels of language learning should prioritize language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) over grammar, and the basic, widely used grammatical rules can be taught in elementary levels with examples and sufficient practice. Communicative proficiency in a language cannot be attained just by learning grammar, which lacks practical application in real-life contexts. (Al-Batal, M., 2017).
6. The number of participants in the language batch should be restricted to 20-25. It is essential to separate the batches of running students and working professionals. Their age must be taken into consideration when distributing students among language batches.
7. Attending every language class should be mandatory for every student. Some learners are often absent from class because they have academic examinations for honors and master's programs, while others have professional commitments related to their jobs. Providing them with recorded classes can be a beneficial alternative for these students so that they can complete the classes that they missed and prepare themselves for upcoming classes. Recorded classes can help a large number of learners avoid dropping out.
8. Adult learners often make errors in pronouncing Arabic letters and words. In this context, while teaching pronunciation, it is effective to introduce first those Arabic letters that have similarities with the Bengali alphabet. Subsequently, comparatively difficult letters should

be taught carefully, allowing sufficient time for focused practice.

9. Due to an overfocus on grammatical rules and reading skills, listening and speaking skills are often not given proper importance; in some cases, these two skills are ignored. Unfortunately, most of the Arabic classrooms are not well equipped with audio and video resources aligning with the speaking and listening skill books. Instructors should encourage learners' speaking activities and create an Arabic environment in the classroom. Rahman and Khatun (2019) and Rashid and Aziz (2018) assert that the enhancement of listening and speaking skills necessitates distinct, well-organized elements within the curriculum, bolstered by suitable audio-visual resources, instead of being regarded as ancillary outcomes of grammar teaching.
10. Reading skill books that are written and organized from simple to complicated should be included and prioritized as course syllabus books. Texts need to be carefully arranged based on grammatical difficulty, sentence length, and vocabulary load. They should start with brief but impactful lines and work their way up to conversation, paragraphs, and short stories. Reading simple, engaging materials extensively enhances learners' confidence and improves their reading fluency. Beginner students should not be exposed to extremely challenging or literary texts (Day, R. R., & Bamford, J., 1998).
11. Arabic grammar must be taught in a straightforward and approachable way in Bangladesh. Instead of requiring students to study multiple grammar books from different disciplines, a unified, series-based grammar textbook should be developed. In addition to theoretical explanations, the book should contain numerous examples and practice exercises so that students can successfully use grammar principles. The lessons in the grammar books must be sequential and level-based.
12. Writing skills can be developed in many ways. Integrating writing skills with reading skills is important. Whatever a learner reads in a comprehension, the writing practices should be attached to this. Due to a lack of writing practices, most of the Arabic

learners in Bangladesh cannot write essays, paragraphs, daily issues, and Arabic answers in exams on their own. To solve this issue, the institutes should engage learners with writing-based activities and assignments in classrooms and outside classrooms, and the instructors should give constructive feedback and criticism to learners individually and collectively after assessing their assignments and homework. It is also important that the learners should utilize new vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammatical rules in their practice of writing.

13. Daily evaluations in language classes that include checking homework, providing feedback, and asking questions about the last class lesson can augment learners' development in all four skills. The more accurate the evaluations, the better the learners' results in language learning experiences.
14. Many institutes in Bangladesh take language course tests after completing all the classes of the course. It causes an inaccurate evaluation of learners' language skills. Exams should be conducted after a series of lessons or upon completing a skill level, ideally after at least 12 to 14 classes. The language questions for the exam should be formulated in a manner that reflects the skills learners have acquired. After examination, the instructor should assess the answer scripts and provide them to learners together with individual and collective feedback. The instructor should review common mistakes and their shortcomings after the test and offer suggestions on how to improve each of the four skills.

Conclusion

This study finds that adult learners of Bangladesh with a general education system encounter various challenges in learning the Arabic language. There are two types of challenges: Non-linguistic difficulties and linguistic difficulties. To tackle the non-linguistic issues, many suggestions have been proposed with different methodical and systematic strategies for the institutes, instructors, and learners. Discussions of prior literature with quantitative data from this study indicate that these

external issues restrain the adults from finding proper and effective language learning. Sometimes these issues cause demotivation and disappointment among learners. Grammar-centric learning, a lack of implementation of modern methods, and inexperienced instructors are the main roots of the external problems. The class size, combining working professionals with full-time students, and irregularity in attendance affect their learning experience as well as lead to low-quality learning. Consequently, the learners find this language challenging and cannot continue the course due to a lack of motivation. Bangla-speaking learners face more difficulties than others due to the difference between Bengali and Arabic in terms of pronouncing some Arabic letters that are not familiar to them. Moreover, insufficient learning resources for the four skills accelerate the difficulties for Bengali-speaking learners.

Trying to use the foreign resources of Middle Eastern countries without considering the environment, culture, motivations, and purposes of the learners magnifies the difficulties. Additionally, teaching Arabic grammar requires proper chronological strategies of words and sentence structures and grammatical rules progressing from easy to hard levels and from familiar to advanced uses. As a result, the adult learners start believing that mastering Arabic is impossible for them. Consequently, a large number of learners drop out of Arabic language learning. The findings of this research paper suggest that a massive reformation of language teaching methodologies is required to teach adult learners. To mitigate these challenges faced by adult learners, an organized plan should be implemented. This plan must have a learner-based curriculum, communicative and skill-oriented methods, and separate learning materials for different ages and professional levels. This plan must be executed gradually by experts in Arabic language teaching over three to four years of consistent practical fieldwork, integrating teaching techniques that address cognitive, motivational, and practical needs, while also considering learners' feedback to enhance the effectiveness of language institutes in teaching and learning Arabic and to reduce the challenges faced by adult learners in Bangladesh.

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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study to collect data from adult Arabic language learners of two institutes in Bangladesh is accessible via the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BVYtMZTPTZ1Wv0HIZvts8xeicQ9O4IbF/view?usp=sharing>

Appendix B: Survey Response Data

The anonymized response data collected from 200 participants through the questionnaire are available at the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15dHe4vPBMW4WRXCAYCoMXhFH6qPZhHaPPXLsv9fOtQA/edit?usp=sharing>

Note: All personally identifiable information has been removed from the dataset to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality.