

THE URGENCY OF LEARNING ARABIC IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN INDONESIA

¹Agus Yasin, ²Riska Hanan Nurahmah, ³Jamal

^{1,2,3} Universitas Darussalam Gontor, Ponorogo, Indonesia

elyasien@unida.gontor.ac.id, riskahanannurahmah32@student.pba.unida.gontor.ac.id,
elmal4112@gmail.com

Abstract

Article Info	Globalization facilitates people's access to a wide range of information through modernity and technology. Qualified human resources are the key to success in the globalization era, and foreign language proficiency is required. Using a qualitative approach based on a literature review, this study investigates the importance of learning Arabic for the quality of human resources. The findings of this study validate that studying Arabic may improve the quality of human resources. Not only that, but being the country with the most Muslims in the world, Indonesians have the opportunity to sharpen and expand their relationships with Allah.
Received : 09/06/23	
Revised : 19/06/23	
Accepted: 30/06/23	

Keywords: Arabic, Globalization, Human Resources

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization makes it easier for someone to access various knowledge through modernization and technology. Everyone can easily access information about science, news, and any other information they want to know (Nasrika, 2019). A country needs to balance the flow of globalization with its country's capabilities, because globalization brings changes in various areas of life, and the most felt in the field of Human Resources (HR) (Rusman, 2022). The HR of a nation contribute crucially to the progress of the nation, because an advanced nation is actually a nation that is supported by quality resources, and can give birth to various creativities to support the development of its nation (Anas, 2020).

However, it is very unfortunate that many countries cannot follow the development of this era, one of which is Indonesia. Until now, the quality of human resources in Indonesia is still relatively low. According to the human resource development index, Indonesia is ranked below ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, and even Vietnam, which has just emerged from its slump (Anas, 2020). Many countries, including Indonesia, are less successful in implementing education because stakeholders do not understand the concept, so that the curricula that are compiled are only aimed at academics that are not implementable for industry (Suharno et al., 2020). In fact, with globalization, many opportunities have been created for all people in the world to compete with each other as superior human resources.

Thus, it is necessary to make efforts to prepare competitive, skilled, qualified, and relevant human resources to be able to compete in the international constellation. In lagging behind the quality of our human resources today, we are also faced with having to fight hard to face global competition which has begun to become intense (Anas, 2020).

There are various efforts to improve the quality of a nation's human resources to be able to survive in the era of globalization, one of which is with their ability to speak. The loss of boundaries between space and time in interactions between individuals in the era of globalization demands the ability to interact and communicate effectively and efficiently. It is undeniable that language plays a very important role in global relations (Damayanti & Maharani, 2011). Foreign language skills are fundamental skills for individuals to be able to take advantage of advances in information technology and follow the pace of globalization to the fullest (Rasuki, 2021).

2. METHOD

This research used qualitative research methods. Creswell (2016) defines qualitative research design as a research process based on distinctive methods for researching human or societal problems by building a complex and holistic picture, analyzing words, and reporting detailed views from sources when conducting research. The literature study here uses secondary data that researchers collect from various published research results. Through the analytical descriptive qualitative method, the researcher will explain the exposure related to the data obtained through the form of words. The analytical descriptive research method is carried out by providing descriptions related to facts which are then forwarded analytically (Yanita, 2016).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

HR development is one of the strategies in facing the globalization era (Rusman, 2022). HR development cannot be separated from globalization because both are closely related to the increasingly rapid development and encouragement of service improvements that adapt to the demands of the community so that there is no lag (Nasrika, 2019). Qualified human resources are the key to success in facing the era of globalization (Anas, 2020).

A. The Relevance of Language Skills to the Quality of Human Resources

According to University of the People, crucial component of interpersonal connection is language. All animals have their own means of communication, but only humans have perfected the use of cognitive language. Frank Smith, a psycholinguistic expert, said that one cannot see another person's point of view when you only have one language so that the ability to speak a foreign language is very important to help someone increase their knowledge from various points of view (Gaol, 2022). In addition to increasing brain intelligence, learning a foreign language can also improve memory and basic brain functions, such as thinking and acting. This was confirmed through a study conducted by Harvard University which stated that learning a foreign language is proven to be able to improve critical thinking skills and creativity (Gaol, 2022).

As the world grows more globalized, the benefits of studying foreign languages are expanding, and bilingualism is currently arguably the most practical real-world skill ever. Studies have demonstrated the cognitive benefits of learning another language (Dick, 2022). The benefits of being bilingual, trilingual or more make you a resource of higher value than others (English First, 2019). Furthermore, foreign language skills, such as Arabic and English, affect a person's achievement (Mambaunnisa, 2014).

The value of learning a foreign language cannot be overstated, and the reasons for doing so are numerous. Learning a foreign language helps to break down boundaries and links people on a deeper level of mutual understanding. Furthermore, achieving this mutual understanding will certainly lead to a more exciting and rewarding personal and professional life (Dick, 2022). Learning different languages broadens one's horizons and makes one more educated (Sabitovich, 2021).

In the era of globalization marked by transparency in every aspect of life, high-quality human resources are needed who have sufficient knowledge and skills to balance certain values that are relevant to the modern world. HR is the energy or strength/ability possessed by a person in the form of thinking power, creativity, initiative and work that is still stored in them as potential energy that is ready to be developed into useful potentials in accordance with the wishes of the human themselves (Ansori, 2016). There are at least four characteristics of intelligent quality human beings (Matsuhi, 1998), namely 1) added values; 2) abstraction system thinking; 3) experimentation and test; and 4) collaboration. Focusing on the first point, namely added values, where each person's value varies based on their abilities. The more foreign languages mastered, the more added value for the individual (Hakim, 2016).

In the era of globalization, the ability to understand foreign languages is needed (Damayanti & Maharani, 2011) to improve the quality in human resources. With the acceleration of globalization processes, an increasing number of people conclude that learning other languages is essential

(Sabitovich, 2021). The importance of having foreign language skills is increasingly felt in the industrial era 4.0/5.0, where information technology and globalization are developing very rapidly and are integrated with various industrial sectors. By having adequate foreign language skills, individuals can make the most of this momentum. For example, individuals who have foreign language skills can take advantage of the pace of development of information technology and globalization where they can engage in various information sharing activities to take advantage of these activities to expand their social networks or support better self-professionalism (Rasuki, 2021).

Mastery of foreign languages is necessary because 1) mastery of foreign languages is the entrance to enter a global world community; and 2) a means to absorb knowledge that is developing in other countries and conversely it becomes a medium for spreading knowledge that is developing in Indonesia abroad (Santoso, 2014). Foreign language proficiency is the key for anyone to develop. By mastering a foreign language, in the future it will be easier to understand other abilities, such as digital, technology, and so on, because currently many high-quality learning resources come from international references (Rossa, 2022).

Even though the Indonesian nation's literacy index itself is relatively low, the utilization of the application of a foreign language is very important as a means of strengthening Indonesian literacy (Nugroho, 2019). Meanwhile, according to an assessment based on the Community Literacy Development Index (IPLM), Indonesia's score in 2022 is 64.48 on a scale of 1-100, and is considered to be still not encouraging and continues to be a very concerning national problem (DPR, 2023). Utilizing foreign languages according to needs can support Indonesian-language literacy works to be recognized internationally (Nugroho, 2019). On the other hand, by mastering foreign languages, students can contribute to developing Indonesia through various fields such as knowledge transfer programs and international programs (Gaol, 2022).

B. The Importance of Learning Arabic

According to Zaim (2016) in the concept of language learning, there are four language skills that must be mastered by a language learner, namely speaking skills, listening skills, reading skills, and writing skills (Ariawan et al., 2022).

a) Speaking

Speaking skills include productive oral skills. Referred as a productive skill because the learner must produce something in learning to use language. More than that, speaking is an activity that includes two or more individuals in which the participants are both listeners and speakers and must act on what they hear and contribute meaningfully (Brown, 2004). In short, speaking can be interpreted as conveying one's intentions (ideas, thoughts, feelings) to others by using spoken language so that these intentions can be understood by others.

b) Listening

Listening is a skill that every language learner should have. This capacity is also required to receive varied linguistic information, which serves as the foundation for language abilities. Listening abilities are the ability to understand the spoken words of language learners through their own ears.

c) Reading

Reading is essentially a complex thing that involves many things, not just reciting written words, but also involving visual, thinking, psycholinguistic and metacognitive activities (Rahim, 2008). As a visual process, reading is a process of translating written symbols into spoken words. As a thinking process, reading includes word recognition activities, literal understanding, interpretation, critical reading, and creative understanding. Word recognition can be in the form of reading words using a dictionary. Furthermore, reading is a receptive skill in an attempt to formulate the meaning of the information conveyed in a text (Ratminingsih, 2019). Therefore, it can be concluded that reading is a complex activity, involving two related processes, namely word recognition and comprehension.

d) Writing

Writing is one of the productive skills that is very important for students to master in their

efforts to learn the language being studied. Writing can be an effective way for someone to accelerate their learning in learning a foreign language.

Of course, of all the languages in the world, not all of them have to be learned. In the laws and regulations, the definition of international language is not explained, so other references are needed to describe it. So far, the phrase international language refers to at least four concepts, namely (1) the official language of the United Nations (UN), (2) the language of communication between countries, (3) English as a world language, and (4) Esperanto (Sartono, 2020).

According to the UN, currently there are six international languages, namely English, French, Spanish, Russian, Mandarin and Arabic. Arabic became the official language after the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 3190 on December 18, 1973. Around 320 million people speak Arabic as their first language, which is nearly as many as native English speakers worldwide, and here are facts and events that contributed to Arabic's emergence as a worldwide language (Costa, 2021):

a) Politics

Global events such as the Arab upheavals, the 9/11 attacks, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict piqued the interest of young students for political and job-seeking reasons. When we speak of the historical Arab Spring, we are referring to a period marked by upheavals, hundreds of marches and protests, embryonic democracy, and civil conflicts. It all began in a Tunisian city in December 2010 and quickly spread throughout the Arab World. However, it has far-reaching ramifications that are still having an influence on the world more than a decade later. People all across the world were triggered by the news, and their desire in learning about these nations' revolutions rose. The same thing happened following the 9/11 attacks. Following such a tragic occurrence, there was a rapid increase in the number of new Arabic learners, as well as a surge in the demand for Arabic speakers to handle the political, military, and economic issues surrounding the participation of the Middle East and North Africa. Arabic has gained in popularity as a result of all of these political events and environment.

b) Globalization

In this new period of globalization, the economic issue has played a role. Thousands of individuals have been able to learn Arabic from the comfort of their own homes thanks to the Internet revolution. Many have taken advantage of this chance to incorporate Arabic into their curriculum, as it is regarded as an important international language due to its large number of speakers and status as the official or co-official language in 25 separate governments and territories. This new period has also resulted in economic expansion among Middle Eastern governments, with expanding marketplaces and organizations across borders, resulting in a plethora of job and business prospects.

c) Volunteering

Others, on the other hand, pursued the Arabic language for reasons of compassion and cultural enrichment. Many humanitarian relief workers bound for Middle Eastern crisis zones find themselves in need of learning Arabic as a vehicle to execute their daily jobs. Not just humanitarian workers in the Middle East, but also employees in refugee counseling centers and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) across Europe and Asia that give services to migrants and asylum seekers. Furthermore, learning the local language allows you to connect with and empathize with the locals.

d) Migration

Mass migrant movements have occurred in the last decade as a result of political, economic, and social issues such as military conflicts, poverty, insecurity, unemployment, and so on. Many Arab populations have grown increasingly integrated and established in many other nations, boosting neighboring interest in learning about Arab culture and desire to communicate with them.

e) Culture

Another aspect that contributed to the increase of Arabic learners was the increasing importance of Arab culture and literature during the last century. Furthermore, Arabic calligraphy is known for its unsurpassed beauty due to its symmetry, a perfect balance of dots,

many high-quality learning materials now originate from worldwide references, understanding a foreign language will make it simpler to comprehend other talents, such as digital, technology, and so on, in the future. Using other languages to meet specific needs might help Indonesian-language literacy efforts get international recognition. Students, on the other hand, may contribute to Indonesia's development through many disciplines such as knowledge transfer programs and international programs by studying foreign languages. A language student must master four language skills in the notion of language learning: speaking skills, listening skills, reading skills, and writing abilities. Arabic is a global language, with over 320 million people using it as their first tongue. This large number is the result of a variety of factors including politics, globalization, volunteerism, migration, and culture. In general, studying Arabic provides the same advantages as learning other foreign languages. However, Indonesia is renowned across the globe as a Muslim country, which emphasizes the need of most Indonesians acquiring Arabic. There are at least six reasons why studying Arabic is important in Indonesia: 1) individual and community responsibility; 2) understanding the Quran and Sunnah; 3) right aqidah and world-view; 4) think with Quran; 5) beauty people; and 6) love. That being said, it can be stated that the necessity of studying Arabic not only increases one's potential in becoming a quality human resource, but also assists someone, particularly Muslims, in deepening their religious understanding and becoming closer to Allah.

REFERENCES

- [1] Anas. (2020). Sumber Daya Manusia Indonesia di Era Globalisasi. *Jurnal Riset*, 3(September), 95–112.
- [2] Anon (2019). Pentingnya Kemampuan Berbahasa Asing untuk Prospek Karirmu ke Depan. Artikel daring English First yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.ef.co.id/englishfirst/adults/blog/pentingnya-kemampuan-berbahasa-asing-untuk-prospek-karirmu-ke-depan/>
- [3] Anon (nd). Reasons for Learning Arabic. Artikel daring Fluent Arabic yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.fluentarabic.net/reasons-for-learning-arabic/>
- [4] Ansori, A. H. (2016). Strategi Peningkatan Sumber Daya Manusia dalam Pendidikan Islam. *Qathruna*, 2(2), 29–52.
- [5] Ariawan, O. J., Astuti, D., Harsapranata, A. I., & Ramadhayanti, A. (2022). PERAN PENGUASAAN BAHASA INGGRIS TERHADAP PENINGKATAN KUALITAS
- [6] SUMBER DAYA MANUSIA (SDM) (Studi Kasus Lembaga Kesejahteraan Sosial Anak Al Amanah, Bedahan Sawangan Depok). *JPM Jurnal Pengabdian Mandiri*, 1(2), 135–142. <http://bajangjournal.com/index.php/JPM>
- [7] Brown (2004). *Language Assessment: Principles and classroom Practices*. Longman
- [8] Costa, Mireia (2021). Facts and Events that Made Arabic Rise as a Global Language. Artikel daring Ahlan World yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.arabiclanguageonline.com/blog/facts-arabic-rise-global-language/>
- [9] Creswell, John W. (2016). *Research Design: Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Campuran*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- [10] Damayanti, R., & Maharani, A. (2011). Kebutuhan Penguasaan Bahasa Asing pada Mahasiswa Universitas Paramadina dalam Era Globalisasi. *Journal Unair*, 24(3), 271–279.
- [11] Dick, Kendall (2022). Why is it important to learn a Foreign Language?. Artikel daring Go Abroad yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.goabroad.com/articles/language-study-abroad/why-is-it-important-to-learn-a-foreign-language>
- [12] Gaol, D. A. Lumban (2022). Penguasaan Bahasa Asing bagi Mahasiswa dalam Memajukan Bangsa. Artikel daring Institut Teknologi Sumatera yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.its.ac.id/news/2022/11/12/eksistensi-bahasa-asing-sebagai-tuntutan-akademisi-dalam-memajukan-pendidikan/>
- [13] Hakim, M. A. R. (2016). Urgensi Penggunaan Bahasa Inggris Bagi Masyarakat Indonesia Dalam Menjalani Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean (Mea). *At-Ta'lim*, 15(2), 267–281.

- [14] Mambaunnisa. (2014). Pengaruh kemampuan berbahasa asing (arab-inggris) terhadap prestasi belajar siswa. *Unpublished Script*, 23–24.
- [15] Matsuhu (1998). Menuju Sistem Pendidikan yang Lebih Baik Menyongsong Era Baru Pasca Orba. Makalah yang disampaikan pada diskusi panel HMJ-KI IAIN Jakarta.
- [16] Nasrika. (2019). Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia dalam Era Globalisasi. *Revitalisasi Manajemen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0*, 149–157. <http://conference.um.ac.id/index.php/apfip2/article/view/376>
- [17] Nugroho, R. W. (2019). Pemanfaatan Penerapan Bahasa Asing Sebagai Penguat Literasi Bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Kependidikan*, 1.
- [18] Putri, A. M. H. (2023). Negara dengan Umat Muslim Terbanyak di Dunia, RI Nomor Berapa?. Artikel daring CNBC yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/research/20230328043319-128-424953/negara-dengan-umat-muslim-terbanyak-dunia-ri-nomor-berapa#:~:text=Melansir%20dari%20data%20World%20Population,Berikut%20data%20lengkapny>.
- [19] Rahim, Farida (2008). Pelajaran Membaca di Sekolah Dasar. Jakarta : Bumi Aksara. Rasuki, M. (2021). Upaya Meningkatkan Kesadaran Generasi Muda tentang
- [20] Pentingnya Belajar Bahasa Asing. *Jurnal.Unmuhjember.Ac.Id*, 1(2), 61–70. <http://jurnal.unmuhjember.ac.id/index.php/ABDI/article/view/6343>
- [21] Rossa, Vania (2022). Indonesia Hadapi Bonus Demografi, Kecakapan Bahasa Asing jadi Bekal untuk Tingkatkan Kualitas SDM. Artikel daring Suara yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://www.suara.com/pressrelease/2022/04/22/144051/indonesia-hadapi-bonus-demografi-kecakapan-bahasa-asing-jadi-bekal-untuk-tingkatkan-kualitas-sdm>
- [22] Rusman. (2022). Tantangan Sumber Daya Manusia di Era Globalisasi. *Ilmiah Ilmu Manajemen*, 1(2), 78–84.
- [23] Sabitovich, S. J. (2021). The role of a foreign language in world development. *ACADEMICA: An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 11(3), 824– 828. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2249-7137.2021.00698.4>
- [24] Santoso, I. (2014). Pembelajaran Bahasa Asing Di Indonesia: Antara Globalisasi Dan Hegemoni. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 14(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.17509/bs_jpbsp.v14i1.696
- [25] Sartono (2020). Bahasa Internasional. Artikel daring Kemdikbud RI yang diakses pada 27 Juli 2023 melalui tautan: <https://badanbahasa.kemdikbud.go.id/artikel-detail/864/bahasa-internasional>
- [26] Yanita, H. (2016). Analisis Struktur Retorika Dan Penanda Kebahasaan Bagian Hasil Dan Pembahasan Artikel Jurnal Penelitian Bisa Fkip Unib Untuk Bidang Pengajaran Bahasa. *Diksa : Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 2(2), 165–170. <https://doi.org/10.33369/diksa.v2i2.3457>