

Difficulties and Solutions in Learning *Qowaid Nahwu* for Beginners: A Case Study

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i4.2640>

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A B S T R A C T

Learning *qowaid nahwu* (Arabic grammar) at the beginner level is often challenging because students must understand abstract grammatical concepts and apply complex linguistic rules in authentic language use. This study aims to identify the learning difficulties experienced by beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid, examine the factors contributing to these difficulties, and explore the pedagogical strategies employed to address them. The study adopted a post-positivist paradigm using a qualitative case study approach. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, diagnostic tests, and document analysis, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings revealed that students experienced difficulties in understanding *i'rab* rules, distinguishing between *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah*, applying grammatical rules in context, and determining correct word-final inflections. These challenges were attributed to memorization-oriented instruction, limited visual learning resources, and insufficient scaffolded practice. To overcome these problems, instructors implemented *i'rab* charts, structured drills, gradual scaffolding, and contextualized communicative activities. These pedagogical strategies improved students' grammatical understanding and facilitated more effective application of *nahwu* rules in practical Arabic communication.

Keywords: *Arabic Grammar, Qowaid Nahwu, Beginners, LPBA Nurul Jadid*

Article History:

Received 30th May 2026

Accepted 13th June 2026

Published 02nd July 2026



INTRODUCTION

Learning *qowaid nahwu* (Arabic grammar) constitutes a fundamental component of Arabic language acquisition because it enables learners to understand grammatical relationships and construct linguistically accurate sentences. For beginner learners, mastery of *nahwu* serves as the foundation for developing other language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Despite its importance, Arabic grammar is widely regarded as one of the most difficult aspects of language learning due to its abstract concepts, complex rule system, and extensive use of *i'rab* (grammatical inflection) (Rachman, 2024; Royyan, 2024). Consequently, many beginner learners experience difficulties in understanding grammatical structures and applying them appropriately in authentic language use.

Previous studies have consistently reported that difficulties in learning Arabic grammar are a common phenomenon among novice learners. Research has shown that students often struggle to identify grammatical functions, distinguish sentence patterns, and apply grammatical rules in language production activities. Zein & Yahya (2026) found that beginner learners frequently experience cognitive overload when introduced to multiple *i'rab* rules simultaneously. Similarly, Fatma (2025) reported that students encounter difficulties in recognizing syntactic positions within sentence structures, particularly when dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary and complex sentence patterns. These findings indicate that grammar learning difficulties are not limited to memorizing rules but also involve deeper challenges related to comprehension and practical application.

The challenges faced by beginner learners are further explained by contemporary theories of language acquisition. The Noticing Hypothesis suggests that learners must consciously notice grammatical forms and functions within meaningful input before acquisition can occur (Wahyuni et al., 2025). Likewise, constructivist perspectives emphasize that grammatical knowledge develops gradually through active engagement with language rather than through passive memorization. However, Arabic grammar instruction in many educational settings remains predominantly rule-oriented and deductive, requiring students to memorize definitions and classifications without sufficient opportunities to apply them in communicative contexts. As a result, learners may be able to recall grammatical concepts theoretically while struggling to use them accurately in practice.

Recent studies have also highlighted several effective instructional strategies for improving grammar learning among beginner students. Takul (2024) demonstrated that the use of *i'rab* charts and visual representations significantly enhanced learners' understanding of grammatical relationships. Fatma (2025) found that scaffolding techniques based on graded examples and guided practice improved students' ability to analyse sentence structures independently. Furthermore, research on contextualized grammar instruction revealed that integrating grammatical concepts into meaningful language activities promotes deeper understanding and long-term retention (Jeni, 2025). The Grammar in Use approach similarly argues that grammatical rules should be learned through repeated exposure and contextualized application rather than isolated memorization exercises (Judijanto et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have contributed valuable insights into Arabic grammar instruction, most have focused on the effectiveness of particular teaching techniques or learning media. Limited attention has been given to the specific difficulties experienced by beginner learners in pesantren-based Arabic language institutions and to the development of pedagogical solutions grounded in empirical case-study evidence. In particular, research examining *qowaid nahwu* learning difficulties within the context of LPBA Nurul Jadid remains scarce.

The present study addresses this gap by investigating the forms of *nahwu* learning difficulties experienced by beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid, analyzing the factors contributing to these difficulties, and examining the pedagogical solutions implemented to overcome them. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on a pesantren-based Arabic language institution and its effort to formulate contextual instructional solutions that align with the learning culture and linguistic environment of LPBA Nurul Jadid. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically to the literature on Arabic grammar acquisition and practically to the development of more effective *nahwu* instruction for beginner learners.

METHOD

This study employed a post-positivist paradigm and adopted a descriptive qualitative case study design. The post-positivist paradigm was selected because it enables researchers to understand social phenomena through empirical investigation while maintaining critical reflection, data verification, and triangulation. A qualitative case study design was considered appropriate because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of the difficulties encountered by beginner learners in learning *qowaid nahwu* within a specific educational context, namely LPBA Nurul Jadid.

The case study approach allowed the researchers to explore the forms of learning difficulties, the factors contributing to these difficulties, and the pedagogical strategies implemented to address them. Although the study primarily relied on qualitative data obtained through observations, interviews, and document analysis, limited descriptive quantitative data, such as the frequency of *i'rab* errors and students' performance on diagnostic tasks, were used to support and strengthen the interpretation of the findings. These quantitative data served as complementary evidence rather than as the primary focus of the investigation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**Problems of Qowaid Nahwu among Beginner Students**

The learning of qowaid nahwu at LPBA Nurul Jadid demonstrates various problems experienced by beginner students. The research findings were obtained through classroom observations, interviews with students and ustad instructors, as well as basic nahwu diagnostic tests. The results indicate that students' difficulties are not only related to memorizing grammatical rules, but also to their ability to understand grammatical functions and apply the rules within sentence contexts.

The first problem identified was cognitive overload. Students received a large amount of *i'rab* material within a short period of time, causing difficulties in understanding the relationships among grammatical rules. Most students were able to memorize basic definitions such as *mubtada'*, *khabar*, *fa'il*, and *maf'ul bih*, but were not yet capable of applying them in sentence analysis. Based on the results of the diagnostic tests, approximately 68% of the students still made errors in determining the final vowel markings (*harakat*) of words when sentence patterns changed.

The second problem identified was the difficulty in distinguishing the structures of *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah*. Based on classroom observations, many students were still confused in determining the positions of *mubtada'*, *khabar*, and *fa'il*. The most dominant error occurred when students identified a noun appearing after a *fi'il* as *mubtada'*, whereas according to grammatical rules it actually functions as *fa'il*.

The third problem identified was the low implementative ability of students in applying nahwu rules. Some students were able to explain grammatical theories orally, yet they were still unable to construct new sentences independently. In sentence-construction exercises, students tended to rely on memorized patterns without fully understanding the functional relationships among words.

In addition, the study also found recurring errors in the use of *raf'*, *nashab*, and *jar* vowel markings. These errors most frequently appeared in advanced *i'rab* exercises and in the construction of *jumlah fi'liyyah*. Based on the analysis of students' worksheets, the use of *harakat* was often inconsistent with the grammatical functions of words within sentences.

Furthermore, some students experienced difficulties in understanding abstract nahwu terms such as *'amil*, *ma'mul*, *mahal i'rab*, and *na't*. This occurred because the instructional process remained predominantly theoretical and was insufficiently connected to contextual Arabic language practice. Based on interview findings, students found the material easier to understand when the ustad used simple sentence examples and visualized sentence structures.

Overall, the findings of the study indicate that the problems of qowaid nahwu among beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid are influenced by the complexity of the material, limited understanding of sentence structures, and the lack of applicative exercises in nahwu instruction.

Factors Causing Difficulties in Learning Nahwu

The research findings indicate that difficulties in learning qowaid nahwu among beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid are influenced by several major factors. The data were obtained through classroom observations, interviews with students and ustad instructors, as well as analyses of the classroom learning process. The findings reveal that students' difficulties are not only caused by the complexity of nahwu material itself, but are also influenced by instructional methods, learning media, students' foundational abilities, and psychological factors.

The first factor is the dominance of memorization-based methods over contextual learning approaches. Based on interview results, most students stated that the learning process emphasized memorizing definitions, *i'rab* formulas, and nahwu rules more than practicing Arabic language use in real contexts. As a result, students were able to explain theories orally,

yet were still unable to apply them flexibly in sentence analysis and construction. This condition caused students' understanding to remain theoretical rather than applicative.

The second factor is the limited use of visual media for illustrating nahwu structures. Based on classroom observations, the use of instructional media such as sentence-structure charts, nahwu concept maps, and color-coded word-function markers was still very limited. In fact, visual media could help students understand the relationships among sentence elements more concretely. This limitation caused students to experience difficulties in distinguishing the functions of *mubtada'*, *khobar*, *fa'il*, and *maf'ul bih* within sentences.

The third factor is the lack of gradual and repetitive exercises in nahwu instruction. Some students admitted that they only understood the material when it was directly demonstrated by the *ustad*, but experienced difficulties again when faced with different sentence forms. This indicates that the exercises provided had not fully implemented a step-by-step learning process progressing from simple patterns to more complex ones. As a result, students were not yet accustomed to independently applying nahwu rules to various sentence structures.

The fourth factor is the heterogeneous background of students' Arabic language abilities. Based on interview results, some students came from pesantren-based educational institutions and therefore already possessed basic Arabic language skills, while others came from general schools with very limited exposure to Arabic. These differences in initial competence affected the speed at which students understood qowaid nahwu material. Students without prior Arabic foundations generally required more time to understand Arabic terminology and sentence structures.

In addition to academic factors, the study also identified psychological factors influencing the nahwu learning process. Some students perceived nahwu as a difficult, complicated, and intimidating subject from the very beginning. This perception caused students to lack confidence when completing *i'rab* exercises or when asked to explain sentence structures in front of the class. Fear of making mistakes negatively affected students' motivation and willingness to independently analyze sentences.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that difficulties in learning qowaid nahwu among beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid are influenced by a combination of pedagogical factors, students' initial competencies, and psychological conditions within the learning process. These factors are interconnected and collectively contribute to students' low ability to understand and apply nahwu rules contextually.

Pedagogical Solutions in Overcoming Nahwu Problems

Based on the results of classroom observations and learning evaluations, LPBA Nurul Jadid has implemented several pedagogical solutions to overcome qowaid nahwu problems among beginner students. These solutions were applied gradually with the aim of helping students understand nahwu rules in a simpler, more applicative, and contextual manner. The findings indicate that the instructional strategies employed were able to improve students' understanding of sentence structures and grammatical functions in Arabic.

The first solution was the use of *i'rab* charts and sentence-structure visualization in the learning process. The *ustad* used simple diagrams to explain the relationships among *mubtada'*, *khobar*, *fi'il*, *fa'il*, and *maf'ul bih* within sentences. These visual media helped students understand word functions in a more concrete and systematic way. Based on classroom observations, students appeared to recognize the patterns of *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah* more easily after the implementation of sentence-structure charts in instruction.

Furthermore, the use of visualization also helped students reduce errors in determining the final vowel markings (*harakat*) of words. Before the use of visual media, most students experienced confusion when performing *i'rab* analysis on sentences with changing structures. However, after the implementation of *i'rab* charts, students gradually became able to distinguish word functions according to their positions within sentences.

The second solution was the implementation of pattern drills based on simple sentence structures. In classroom practice, the *ustad* provided repetitive exercises on *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jummaḥ fi'liyyah* patterns gradually, using different vocabulary variations. This strategy was carried out through habituation to simple sentence patterns before students were directed toward more complex sentence forms. Based on interview findings, students felt that *nahwu* rules were easier to understand when the material was delivered through repeated exercises rather than through theoretical explanations alone.

The implementation of pattern drills also helped students improve their Arabic sentence-construction abilities. Through repetitive exercises, students gradually became accustomed to identifying the functions of *mubtada'*, *khabar*, *fi'il*, and *fa'il* in various sentence forms. Thus, students' understanding was no longer limited to memorizing theories, but also developed into the practical application of grammatical rules.

The third solution was the implementation of gradual scaffolding through progressively levelled sentence examples. In the learning process, the *ustad* did not immediately provide materials with complex structures, but instead began with the simplest sentence patterns before gradually progressing toward more varied forms. This approach helped students understand the material gradually according to their levels of ability.

Observation results showed that the scaffolding strategy was able to reduce students' fear of learning *nahwu*. Previously, some students viewed *nahwu* as a difficult and complicated subject. However, after the material was presented gradually, students became more confident in performing *i'rab* analysis and constructing simple sentences.

The fourth solution was the integration of contextual exercises into daily Arabic language activities within the *pesantren* environment. Students were habituated to using certain sentence patterns in simple conversations, written exercises, and everyday language activities. This strategy aimed to ensure that *nahwu* learning did not stop at the theoretical level alone, but was also applied in actual language use.

Based on interview findings, students felt that the material became easier to understand when *nahwu* rules were connected to everyday communication practices. Contextual learning helped students understand the relationship between *nahwu* theory and the practical use of Arabic in daily life. The results of the diagnostic test evaluations showed improvements in students' abilities after the implementation of these instructional strategies. Students demonstrated better competence in identifying grammatical functions of words and in applying final vowel markings (*harakat*) according to *nahwu* rules. In addition, the level of *i'rab* errors decreased compared to the period before the implementation of gradual and contextual learning strategies. These findings indicate that the pedagogical solutions implemented at LPBA Nurul Jadid were sufficiently effective in helping beginner students understand *qowaid nahwu* in a more systematic and applicative manner.

Discussions

Problems of Qowaid Nahwu among Beginner Students

The findings of this study indicate that the problems of learning *qowaid nahwu* among beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid are not merely technical in nature, but also structural and pedagogical. Based on observations, interviews, and diagnostic tests, it was found that the majority of students experienced difficulties in analyzing grammatical functions rather than simply memorizing grammatical rules. The test data showed that 68% of students incorrectly determined the final vowel markings (*harakat*) of words, 61% were unable to accurately distinguish between *mubtada'* and *fa'il*, and 72% experienced errors in the use of *raf'*, *nashab*, and *jar*. These high percentages of errors indicate that the ongoing *nahwu* instruction still operates at the level of memorization and has not yet reached the stage of analytical and applicative understanding.

When analyzed more deeply, the students' error patterns reveal an imbalance between declarative ability and procedural ability. Students were relatively capable of explaining *nahwu* rules verbally, yet failed to apply them within real sentence contexts. This condition was evident when students were able to define *fa'il* as "a noun performing an action," but still

incorrectly identified word functions in *jumlah fi'liyyah*. For example, in the sentence *كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ*, most students still identified the word *الطَّالِبُ* as *mubtada'* rather than *fa'il*. Such errors demonstrate that students understood the rules textually, but had not yet comprehended the syntactic relationships among sentence elements. This finding supports the argument of Fatmawaty (2024), who stated that learning fails to become meaningful learning when students merely memorize information without connecting it to broader conceptual structures.

From a pedagogical perspective, the high rate of errors in *i'rab* analysis indicates that the *nahwu* learning process still places excessive emphasis on theoretical transfer rather than strengthening language-analysis skills (Nurfazri et al., 2025). Based on classroom observations, the *ustad* relied more heavily on lecture methods and explanations of grammatical definitions than on gradual exercises in identifying word functions. As a result, students became accustomed to memorizing formulas without understanding the reasons behind changes in *harakat* within sentence structures. This phenomenon was clearly reflected in errors involving *raf'*, *nashab*, and *jar* usage. Some students assigned *dhammah* endings to *maf'ul bih* because they assumed that all nouns in a sentence must be read in the *marfu'* form. Such mistakes indicate that students had not yet understood the relationship between a word's syntactic position and its corresponding *i'rab* marker.

The research data also indicate that the greatest problem lies in the high cognitive load experienced by students in understanding *nahwu* material. In a single meeting, students often received several concepts simultaneously, such as *mubtada'*, *khabar*, *fa'il*, *maf'ul bih*, along with their *i'rab* changes. As a result, students experienced cognitive overload because they were required to process a large amount of abstract information within a short period of time. This condition caused students' working memory to become unable to organize concepts systematically. Huda et al. (2024) explained that human working memory capacity is highly limited when receiving complex information simultaneously. Therefore, when *nahwu* material is delivered intensively without gradual stages, students experience difficulties in constructing relationships among concepts.

Analysis of the observation data shows that students' errors occurred not merely because of weak memorization, but because students failed to understand the fundamental patterns of Arabic sentence structures. This was evident from the high rate of errors in distinguishing between *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah*. Some students identified every noun appearing at the beginning of a sentence as *mubtada'* without paying attention to the presence of a preceding *fa'il*. For example, in the sentence *ذَهَبَ الْوَلَدُ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ*, students still identified *الْوَلَدُ* as *mubtada'*, whereas syntactically it functions as *fa'il*. These recurring errors indicate that students had not yet understood the basic principles of Arabic sentence structure. According to Makinuddin & Amrulloh (2026), understanding the patterns of *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah* constitutes the primary foundation in *nahwu* learning because it determines how students analyze word functions within sentences.

In addition, the study found that students exhibited a high dependence on memorization patterns. Based on interview findings, some students admitted that they were only able to answer questions when the sentence forms were identical to the examples provided by the *ustad*. When sentence structures were modified or vocabulary items changed, students immediately became confused in determining word functions. This indicates that students' understanding was mechanical rather than flexible. From the perspective of language learning, this condition reflects a low level of transfer of learning, namely students' inability to apply concepts they had learned to new contexts. Syafei (2025) emphasized that effective language learning should develop productive and adaptive abilities, rather than merely encouraging the reproduction of memorized material.

From a psychological perspective, interview data indicate that most students had negative perceptions of *nahwu* from the very beginning of the learning process. Students perceived *nahwu* as a complicated subject filled with formulas and difficult concepts. This perception directly affected students' low self-confidence when performing *i'rab* analysis in front of the class. Classroom observations revealed that students tended to remain silent,

passive, and hesitant to answer the ustad's questions because they were afraid of making mistakes. This condition demonstrates that nahwu-related problems originate not only from the complexity of the material, but are also influenced by psychological pressure during the learning process. Witarto et al. (2025) explained that high levels of learning anxiety can reduce student participation and hinder the process of internalizing learning concepts.

Furthermore, the findings show that nahwu instruction at LPBA Nurul Jadid has not yet become fully contextualized. Nahwu material is still taught more as a collection of grammatical formulas than as a tool for understanding Arabic communicatively. As a consequence, students find it difficult to connect nahwu theory with the practical use of language in everyday situations. This condition is reflected in students' low ability to construct independent sentences. Most students were only capable of imitating sentence patterns that had already been demonstrated, but were unable to independently create new structural variations. Nahwu instruction that relies excessively on memorization of grammatical rules tends to produce static and non-applicative understanding. Amalia et al. (2025) argued that grammar learning centered solely on rule memorization will not develop functional language competence.

Therefore, the analysis of the research data indicates that the problems of qowaid nahwu among beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid are multidimensional in nature. These problems include high cognitive load, weak understanding of syntactic relationships, the dominance of memorization-based methods, low applicative ability, and students' psychological factors toward nahwu learning. The high percentage of errors in i'rab analysis demonstrates that nahwu instruction has not yet succeeded in developing deep language-analysis skills. Consequently, a transformation of nahwu instructional strategies is necessary through approaches that are more contextual, gradual, communicative, and practice-based in sentence analysis, so that students are not only able to memorize grammatical rules, but also able to understand the functions of Arabic comprehensively and applicatively.

Factors Causing Difficulties in Learning Nahwu

The dominance of memorization-based methods in qowaid nahwu instruction at LPBA Nurul Jadid has become one of the primary factors contributing to the low grammatical analysis abilities of beginner students. Based on classroom observations, the learning process was still dominated by activities such as memorizing rule definitions, repeating i'rab formulas, and copying theoretical explanations from nahwu textbooks without being balanced by in-depth exercises in sentence-structure analysis. As a result, students were able to explain the meanings of mubtada', khabar, fa'il, and maf'ul bih verbally, yet failed to apply them when encountering new variations of sentence structures. Diagnostic test data showed that 31 out of 50 students (61%) still incorrectly distinguished between the functions of mubtada' and fa'il, while 36 students (72%) experienced errors in the use of raf', nashab, and jar. These high percentages of errors indicate that nahwu learning remains limited to the level of terminological memorization and has not yet reached the level of applicative syntactic understanding.

Analytically, these patterns of errors reveal a gap between students' declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge refers to students' ability to explain nahwu rules theoretically, whereas procedural knowledge relates to the ability to apply those rules in actual language analysis. This study found that students possessed relatively good declarative knowledge, but weak procedural abilities. For example, in the sentence كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ, as many as 28 students still identified the word الطَّالِبُ as mubtada' rather than fa'il. This error demonstrates that students understood the term fa'il as "the doer of an action," yet were unable to identify the syntactic characteristics of fa'il within the structure of jumlah fi'liyyah. In other words, students memorized the concept without understanding the mechanism of its use within sentence contexts.

This phenomenon indicates that nahwu instruction at LPBA Nurul Jadid has not yet fully implemented the Grammar in Use approach, which positions grammatical rules as tools of communication rather than merely memorized material. In classroom practice, nahwu rules

were taught separately from everyday language use, causing students to fail in understanding the relevance between nahwu theory and practical Arabic communication. Grammar instruction becomes more effective when rules are introduced through real usage contexts, communicative exercises, and language patterns frequently used by students in daily activities. Nisa & Muid (2024) emphasized that grammar is not merely a system of rules, but a tool that helps students understand the meaning and functions of language in communication.

The weakness of this memorization-based approach became increasingly apparent when students encountered variations in sentence structures. Based on observation results, students were only able to answer questions when the sentence patterns were identical to the examples provided by the *ustad*. However, when the sentence structures were modified, students' analytical abilities declined drastically. For example, in the simple pattern *الطَّالِبُ مُجْتَهِدٌ*, as many as 40 students were able to correctly identify the functions of *mubtada'* and *khabar*. However, when the pattern was changed to *كَانَ الطَّالِبُ مُجْتَهِدًا*, the number of students able to answer correctly dropped to only 17 students. This decline of nearly 50% indicates that students' understanding was mechanical and dependent on memorized patterns rather than on a deep understanding of Arabic syntactic principles.

Pedagogically, this condition demonstrates that the learning process has not yet succeeded in developing higher-order thinking skills in nahwu analysis. Students were more accustomed to reproducing answers than critically identifying grammatical functions. Learning that focuses solely on memorization causes students to remain at the levels of remembering and understanding without progressing toward analysing and applying. Rizqiyah et al. (2024) argued that memorization-oriented learning prevents students from developing critical analytical abilities. In the context of this study, students were indeed capable of recalling definitions, but were unable to apply concepts in new situations. Consequently, students' *i'rab* abilities became highly dependent on memorized examples.

In addition to the dominance of memorization methods, the limited use of visual media also became a factor that worsened the problems of nahwu learning. Based on classroom observations, the learning process was still dominated by lecture methods and verbal explanations without the use of sentence-structure charts, word-function relationship schemes, or visual markers for *i'rab* elements. As a result, students experienced difficulties in constructing concrete relationships between syntactic functions and changes in *harakat* within sentences. In fact, nahwu structures are fundamentally abstract because they involve functional relationships among words that are not always directly visible.

From the perspective of cognitive psychology, abstract concepts are easier to understand when they are visualized in concrete forms. Information processed through two channels simultaneously, namely verbal and visual, can be understood more easily and stored more effectively in long-term memory. Kurniawan et al. (2022) explained that dual-channel processing strengthens comprehension and retention of learning materials. In this study, it was found that students understood the patterns of *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah* more quickly when the *ustad* used *i'rab* charts and color-coded markers for word functions. Before the use of visual media, only 14 students (28%) were able to complete *i'rab* exercises independently and correctly. However, after sentence-structure charts were implemented over several learning sessions, the number increased to 29 students (58%). This 30% improvement demonstrates that visualization had a significant influence on the nahwu analysis abilities of beginner students.

The use of *i'rab* charts and pattern drills was able to improve students' understanding of grammatical functions more effectively than conventional lecture methods. Khoinur (2025) emphasized that visual and repetitive learning approaches can strengthen grammatical comprehension. However, this study found an additional fact: the effectiveness of visual media does not stand alone, but is highly dependent on the stages of learning applied. In classroom practice, students found it easier to understand grammatical rules when the material was delivered gradually through scaffolding, beginning with simple patterns before progressing toward more complex sentence structures. For example, students understood the

concept of fa'il more quickly when they were first introduced to simple fi'il patterns before moving to sentence forms containing maf'ul bih and additional modifiers.

Therefore, the analysis of the research data indicates that the main problem in qowaid nahwu learning at LPBA Nurul Jadid lies in the failure of the instructional process to transform nahwu rules from mere objects of memorization into functional tools for language analysis. The dominance of memorization-based methods caused students to master only terminological aspects without deeply understanding syntactic relationships. On the other hand, the minimal use of visual media and contextual exercises caused nahwu concepts to remain abstract and difficult for beginner students to comprehend. Consequently, nahwu instruction requires a transformation toward pedagogical approaches that are more communicative, contextual, visual, and practice-based in language analysis, so that students are not only capable of memorizing grammatical rules, but are also able to apply them functionally in understanding Arabic sentence structures.

Pedagogical Solutions in Overcoming Nahwu Problems

The use of gradual scaffolding in qowaid nahwu instruction at LPBA Nurul Jadid proved to have a significant influence on improving beginner students' understanding in analyzing Arabic sentence structures. Based on classroom observations, the ustad did not immediately present nahwu material in complex structural forms, but instead began with the simplest sentence patterns such as mubtada'-khabar and fi'il-fa'il before progressing to more varied forms such as advanced jumlah fi'liyyah structures, the use of maf'ul bih, na't, and jar majrur. This strategy enabled students to understand the relationships among sentence elements gradually without experiencing excessive cognitive pressure. Learning evaluation data showed that after the implementation of gradual scaffolding over several sessions, the number of students who were able to correctly identify grammatical functions increased from 14 students (28%) to 29 students (58%). This improvement demonstrates that systematic stages of instruction are more effective than presenting nahwu material directly in complex forms.

Pedagogically, scaffolding helps students build conceptual foundations before entering more difficult stages of analysis. In this study, it was found that students who previously struggled to distinguish between mubtada', khabar, and fa'il began to show improvement after receiving gradual exercises progressing from simple to complex patterns. For example, students were first trained to recognize the functions of mubtada' and khabar in basic patterns such as *الطَّالِبُ مُجْتَهِدٌ* before being directed toward more complex forms such as *كَانَ الطَّالِبُ مُجْتَهِدًا* or *إِنَّ الطَّالِبَ مُجْتَهِدٌ*. This progression enabled students to understand changes in word functions and harakat more logically, rather than merely memorizing formulas of i'rab changes.

The research findings also indicate that this gradual approach had an impact on students' psychological conditions. Before the implementation of scaffolding, most students considered nahwu to be a complicated and intimidating subject. Based on interview results, 12 out of 15 students admitted feeling afraid of making mistakes when asked to perform i'rab analysis in front of the class. However, after the learning process was conducted gradually, students became more active in asking questions and more willing to independently analyze sentence structures. This condition demonstrates that scaffolding not only supports students' cognitive development, but also increases their self-confidence and academic courage in the nahwu learning process.

These findings are consistent with the Scaffolding theory developed by Masrura et al. (2024) through the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Students can achieve certain abilities more easily when they receive gradual assistance from teachers or from a more competent learning environment. Such assistance is provided according to students' levels of ability and is gradually reduced as students become capable of learning independently. In the context of this study, the ustad acted as a facilitator who provided guidance, examples, corrections, and simplifications of sentence structures so that students could gradually understand nahwu rules. Thus, the success of nahwu learning is determined not only by the

material being taught, but also by the quality of pedagogical guidance during the learning process.

In addition to scaffolding, the implementation of pattern drills based on sentence structures also proved effective in helping students understand nahwu structures more naturally. Based on classroom observations, the *ustad* routinely provided repetitive exercises involving *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah* patterns with different vocabulary variations. The repetition of these patterns enabled students to gradually recognize syntactic structures automatically without continuously relying on theoretical definitions. Data analysis revealed that students who actively participated in pattern drill exercises demonstrated lower rates of *i'rab* errors compared to students who relied solely on memorizing theoretical rules.

From a linguistic perspective, pattern drills help establish language habits through repetitive pattern practice. According to the behaviorist theory of language developed by Nismawati & Darmawati (2025), continuous repetition of patterns can form automatic language responses within learners. In the context of nahwu learning, repetitive sentence-pattern exercises help students recognize relationships among word functions intuitively, making grammatical analysis faster and more natural. The findings of this study indicate that students were able to determine the functions of *fa'il* and *maf'ul bih* more easily when they became accustomed to seeing and using similar sentence patterns repeatedly in daily exercises.

Scaffolding based on progressively leveled examples is capable of improving students' abilities in identifying word functions within Arabic sentences. Heryadi et al. (2025) explained that gradual instructional support helps learners understand grammatical relationships more systematically. However, this study discovered an additional dimension: the effectiveness of scaffolding at LPBA Nurul Jadid is influenced not only by classroom instructional strategies, but also by the *pesantren* culture that supports the habitual use of Arabic in daily life. The *pesantren* environment enables students to continuously interact with simple Arabic language patterns outside the classroom, allowing the internalization process of nahwu rules to occur more naturally and continuously.

This study also strengthens the findings of Afifa (2024), who explained that qowaid instruction based on pattern habituation has a significant influence on beginner students' abilities to understand Arabic grammatical functions. In this research, it was found that the integration of nahwu exercises with daily communication practices enabled students to understand the relationship between nahwu theory and actual language use more quickly.

Therefore, the findings of this study demonstrate that the problems of qowaid nahwu among beginner students are not caused solely by the complexity of the material, but are also strongly influenced by the instructional approaches employed. Learning processes that are excessively theoretical and memorization-oriented have proven to make it difficult for students to deeply understand syntactic functions. In contrast, scaffolding, pattern drills, and contextual learning approaches have proven more effective in helping students understand nahwu structures gradually, systematically, and applicatively. Consequently, nahwu instruction at LPBA Nurul Jadid requires a pedagogical transformation toward approaches that are more communicative, visual, gradual, and practice-based in language use, so that students are not only capable of memorizing grammatical rules, but are also able to use and analyze Arabic functionally.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that beginner students at LPBA Nurul Jadid experience significant difficulties in learning qowaid nahwu, particularly in understanding and applying grammatical concepts such as *mubtada'*, *khobar*, *fi'il*, *fa'il*, and *maf'ul bih*. The main problems are not limited to memorization, but extend to deeper issues in syntactic comprehension, cognitive overload, and the inability to apply grammatical rules in new sentence contexts. The findings show high error rates in *i'rab* analysis, confusion in distinguishing sentence structures, and weak procedural knowledge, indicating that students tend to understand nahwu theoretically rather than functionally. The difficulties are influenced by several

interrelated factors, including the dominance of memorization-based instruction, limited use of visual learning media, lack of gradual and structured practice, heterogeneous student backgrounds, and psychological barriers such as anxiety and low confidence. These conditions are further reinforced by instructional practices that are still heavily theoretical and insufficiently contextualized, causing students to struggle in connecting grammatical rules with real language use. As a result, nahwu learning remains abstract and difficult to internalize for beginner learners. To address these challenges, LPBA Nurul Jadid has implemented pedagogical solutions such as i'rab visualization, pattern drills, gradual scaffolding, and contextual language practice within the pesantren environment. The findings indicate that these strategies significantly improve students' understanding of sentence structures, reduce i'rab errors, and increase learner confidence. Therefore, a shift toward more contextual, visual, gradual, and practice-based instruction is essential to transform nahwu learning from rote memorization into meaningful grammatical competence that supports functional Arabic language use.

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