



# Problems and Development Ways of Distance Learning In Arabic Language Teaching

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**Abstract:** One of the main factors that contributed to the global spread of distance learning was the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, both students and teachers faced numerous challenges in adapting to the new educational setting. With the transition to technology-based education, Arabic language teachers, like other language instructors, encountered difficulties in using new digital tools. Many educators initially struggled with platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams for conducting online classes. Even though traditional classroom teaching resumed later, the need to develop and improve the distance learning model remains one of the most pressing tasks in the education sector. This article discusses several problems and solutions related to implementing distance learning in Arabic language education.

**Keywords:** Distance Education, Online Teaching, Traditional Class, Arabic Language, Covid-19, Technology, Method, Difficulties, Teacher, Student.

## Introduction

In organizing distance learning, the collaboration between teachers and students plays a key role. Distractions that affect students also impact the teachers. According to Zankova, A.A. (2019), in her article "Teacher of Russian as a Foreign Language in the System of Non-formal Education in the Online Environment" (Teacher. 21st Century, Issue 1, pp. 177–186), the essential characteristics of language teachers in the online environment are flexibility, mobility, and student-centeredness. She emphasizes that educators must combine roles of linguist, methodologist, psychologist, manager, marketer, and content creator to enhance their competence, flexibility, competitiveness, and effectiveness.

Although nearly five years have passed since the COVID-19 pandemic, some challenges in organizing distance education still persist, particularly in teaching Arabic online. For instance, many non-native Arabic teachers face a shortage of suitable platforms and materials. Compared to globally popular languages, the resources and quality platforms available for Arabic are limited. This leads to difficulties in finding or creating appropriate content for online lessons, which is time-consuming.

## Methodology

Moreover, students often compare their learning experience with Arabic to that of previously learned languages like English or Russian. Since there are fewer Arabic learning resources in Uzbek, learners often rely on materials in English or other global languages.

A lack of attention in education leads to reduced productivity. Thus, maintaining student focus in online classes is more challenging than in traditional settings. Teachers must develop individualized strategies based on their teaching skills and methods. One key element of effective learning is the student's ability to ask for clarification when needed.

Initially enthusiastic Arabic learners often lose interest as the material becomes more difficult. Teachers must employ various strategies to retain students' attention, such as using different tools and engaging methods.

The following key factors are essential for successful distance learning:

1. The teacher's proficiency in using modern technology in lessons
2. The number of students
3. Keeping students consistently focused
4. Motivating students while considering their individual differences
5. Ensuring students' conscientious engagement in the lesson
6. Regularly assessing students' knowledge and progress.

In online education, students' familiarity and ability to use technology is crucial. A study by Kolesova, Moskovkin, and Popova (2021) titled Urgent Transition to Group Online Foreign Language Instruction: Problems and Solutions (Electronic Journal of e-Learning, Vol. 19, Issue 1) conducted in Russia found that:

- 77.8% of teachers adapted to online teaching within 1–2 weeks,
- 13.3% had already mastered online methods,
- 6.7% were still struggling to find an optimal model,
- 2.2% did not respond.

## Result and Discussion

Despite the challenges, video tutorials helped many adapt to technology and apply it in Arabic teaching.

Just like in traditional classrooms, class size affects lesson quality in online settings. Large student numbers hinder classroom management. Given the unique complexities of the Arabic language, smaller class sizes are preferable for quality learning. If the number of students is high, it is recommended to divide them into groups, use interactive teaching tools (videos, images, infographics), and explain using simple language while gradually increasing difficulty.

In traditional settings, 15–20 students per class allow effective Arabic teaching. However, in online education, managing large groups remotely becomes even harder, especially when students are unfamiliar with the technology, leading to disruptions—like

unintentionally activating their microphones and creating noise. This makes it harder for teachers to control the class.

The primary issue in online learning—of any subject—is a lack of attention. In face-to-face classes, knowledgeable and disciplined teachers can keep students engaged through interaction and guidance. In contrast, in online learning, students struggle to concentrate, fail to understand the topic, and eventually stop attending classes. To prevent this, Arabic teachers employ various methods like using humor, asking questions, and presentations. However, the most effective tools are visual aids like images and videos.

Because colorful and moving visuals increase students' interest in language. Research was conducted exactly on this topic. According to the research by Daria V. Kolesova, Leonid V. Moskovkin and Tatiana I. Popova (2021) Urgent Transition to Group Online Foreign Language Instruction: Problems and Solutions, *The Electronic Journal of e-Learning* Volume 19 (1):

What helps to concentrate during the online lesson?

- Jokes and communication through chat – 15.6%
- Teacher's jokes – 40%
- Different written, oral, group tasks – 20%
- Small written tasks – 48%
- Asking more questions – 11.1%
- Asking questions during the lesson – 48%
- Paying attention to homework – 8.9%
- A lot of homework – 48%
- Visual materials – 11.1%
- Pictures, images, videos – 63%
- Preparing extra materials – 11.1%
- Teacher's presentations – 29%

From this, it can be seen that teachers enrich the lesson with different tasks (20%) and use humor (15.6%) to overcome difficulties. Students, on the other hand, pointed to visual materials (63%) and small written tasks (48%) as the most effective methods. This means that more visual materials should be used to improve the online learning process.

Even though the fact that the Arabic language stands in second place in terms of difficulty among world languages is true, the teacher's task should firstly be to make the student understand that learning Arabic is not extremely difficult. The reason is that many students have a belief that Arabic is a very complicated language, and during learning they often feel the desire to give up. In such cases, the teacher should take into account each student's individual differences and be able to encourage them to move forward. Some students feel shy in forming speaking skills in the language because of their introverted behavior. As a result, even after a long time, problems in speaking skills remain. In such situations, it means the teacher should be aware of psychological literacy and organize the lesson according to the character of each student.

Another problem that occurs in organizing distance learning is that in traditional education it is easier to know how conscientiously the student approaches the lesson, but

in online education this is a bit difficult. For example, it is harder to know whether a student is reading a dialog, text, or any task given for memorization from another device or actually reciting it by memory. As a solution to this situation, it is recommended to organize hybrid lessons, not completely online, but to hold traditional lessons periodically. Especially, it is advised to hold exam periods in traditional form. Besides that, it can also help to organize lessons where the teacher gives unexpected questions or quickly reviews previous topics without giving the student time to prepare — this ensures the transparency of answers.

Not only in offline education, but also in online education, constantly checking the student's learning progress is one of the important issues. Just like we organize small periodic assessments in traditional education, there are also several alternatives in distance teaching. There are two types of methods to check the students' knowledge. The first is to upload all test questions electronically and set a deadline to complete them. This method is similar to offline, but its disadvantage is in ensuring transparency — that is, it is difficult to know whether the task was completed without referring to any external help. To solve this problem, there is another method in which the time of the control test is informed in advance. Questions are not shown all at once but one by one, and answers must be given after each question. This method is also distinguished by the fact that it identifies the student's knowledge level and teaches them to be quick in answering.

## Conclusion

It has been almost 5 years since we rapidly turned to online education. During this period, we solved many problems. Our goal has always been to teach Arabic to students well and effectively, whether online or offline. There are only two people in the education process: the teacher and the student. We gave the necessary skills to organize lessons effectively, using technical possibilities that should be paid attention to in order to make distance education easier for both of them as much as possible. In organizing lessons, it is recommended to pay serious attention to the number of students and to use more visual materials.

One of the most important skills in language learning is speaking. Each person is an individual, everyone has their own character and their own views. For example, while some do not face any obstacles in speaking in front of the public, others face many problems due to anxiety. Forcing the student to speak Arabic during an online lesson is not suitable for everyone. It is necessary to try to speak with them individually. During working with the student, it is also recommended to communicate with their parents. In this case, it is not required that the parents know the field their child is learning. On the contrary, they need to support and motivate their child mentally. Indeed, in knowledge, not only the teacher's guidance, but also the encouragement of parents is important.

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