# Atomic Habits Principles: Strategy for Implementing Four Laws of Behavior Change in Strengthening Digital Literacy in Arabic Learning

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#### **Abstract**

Digital literacy has become an integral part of life, one of which is learning Arabic. The vast information and knowledge in the digital space require someone to adapt to technological developments. Strengthening digital literacy in Arabic is a form of maximizing the potential of technology in facilitating someone to improve their Arabic language skills. With the advantages and disadvantages of technology, it shows that there are opportunities as well as challenges for an Arabic language learner in responding to and utilizing this technology. The use of technological media in learning can be maximized by implementing digital literacy as a habit and achieving the goals of learning Arabic itself. This research uses a library research method. This research aims to formulate an effective strategy for increasing digital literacy in Arabic drawn from the Four Laws of Behavior Change from the book Atomic Habits by James Clear so that the use of technology can be more optimal and effective, especially in learning Arabic.

**Keywords:** Atomic Habits, Digital Literacy, Arabic

### **INTRODUCTION**

21st-century life is integral to technology and its rapid development. Humans in it need to adapt because the technology that is present can be a huge opportunity and challenge. Various things can be easily accessed via the internet on digital technology such as smartphones and computers. Based on this, the concept of society 5.0 was born, which is defined as an intelligent society that can integrate cyberspace and physical reality (Salgues, 2018). One of the impacts is the tendency to shift from conventional literacy to digital literacy. For this reason, this wide open accessibility must of course be directly proportional to the digital literacy abilities possessed by various components of society, especially in the world of education (Syagif, 2023).

Digital literacy is not only about a person's ability to use technology, but also about understanding and utilizing technology for better and more effective work and learning, and the various information in this space is expected to make a person more open-minded, but still used wisely. UNESCO defines digital literacy as the ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate, and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (UNESCO, 2024). Saavedra (2012) stated that one of the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and ethics of the 21st century in the Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills includes general knowledge and literacy of

communication and information technology. So, digital literacy can be concluded as integrating reading and writing skills and using digital devices simultaneously (Redhana, 2019).

In the current era of technology and the internet, the high intensity of the use of digital devices can be an opportunity for users to optimize the role of these digital devices as a supporter of strengthening digital literacy activities. They consider the use of digital devices no longer as a choice, but a necessity. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) announced that the number of Indonesian internet users in 2024 will reach more than 221 million people. There was an increase of 1.4% (APJII (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia), 2024). Based on this data, digital literacy culture needs to be internalized in all aspects of life, especially language education.

Arabic is the national language of at least 22 countries in the Middle East. Arabic has transformed from being just a religious language as a source of original literature for Islamic religious teachings, to becoming a language of communication between nations and becoming one of the official languages in the United Nations (UN) forum (Umasugi, 2022). Digital technology is one of the factors that determines the level of mastery of a foreign language, apart from the frequency of use and repetition in oral communication between individuals (Eisenberg, 2008). With digital technology intervention in learning, learning should be optimized to develop 21st century skills.

Literacy cannot be separated from the combination of four skills in Arabic that need to be mastered and are interrelated, namely reading (qira'ah), listening (istima'), speaking (kalam), and writing (kitabah). With the existence of digital technology, digital Arabic literacy has become an inevitable part of the habits of Arabic language learners. If explored, there are many opportunities that can be exploited through the current development of digital technology as a means of building digital literacy in Arabic. First, wider access or language learning resource. Second, an interactive and interesting learning experience. Third, the availability of global connectivity and language exchange. Digital literacy allows language learners to connect with target language speakers from all over the world. Fourth, the availability of digital applications for language practice. Fifth, provide users with the opportunity to assess and provide feedback on language competency online using a computer or smartphone (Syagif, 2023). For this reason, Arabic digital literacy has become an important part of modern education in the Arab world, equipping the younger generation with the skills needed in the 21st century.

Arabic digital literacy has great prospects in strengthening access to information, economic progress, social participation and cultural maintenance in the Arab world and throughout the world. The reason is because media literacy involves understanding, how to interpret, the level of critical analysis and drawing up conclusions from texts to become research subjects in various fields ranging from communication, literature, culture, economics, history, general knowledge and of course media studies (Restianty, 2018). So with Arabic digital literacy skills, Arabic language activists can become innovators and drivers of change in their own society.

Increasing Arabic-language digital content allows Arabic language learners to access information, education and other resources. Digital literacy has a broader scale and usually addresses important issues. Digital literacy education can start with skills by honing content reading, by diligently reading content, the use of digital literacy to understand content will be more critical (Restianty, 2018). As users of digital technology, Arabic language learners can also produce digital content or literature in Arabic to assist in the maintenance and development of Arabic in the digital era in various forms and platforms, such as websites, journal articles, microblogs, free articles, posters, compiling e-mails. -book, Youtube, and other platforms.

Digital literacy is an effort to use technology positively in language learning. However, we cannot avoid that technological devices often distract users, thereby interfering with the work that is their main focus. This process could also be experienced from non-social use because smartphones are multi-purpose devices and recent studies suggest that process use (e.g., watching videos, browsing online) is widespread as much as social use and with stronger associations with problematic smartphone use (Throuvala et al., 2021). Apart from distraction, in some circles, students have low interest in learning Arabic. Apart from that, the main challenge that must be conquered by Arabic language activists in Indonesia in the era of society 5.0 is the use of technology to deliver teaching material, so that students can learn anywhere and anytime (Jamil & Agung, 2022).

Based on the obstacles that have been explained, a strategic approach is needed so that digital literacy can become easier and more attractive, and the use of digital technology can be maximized. In this research, the author describes the principles of four rules of behavior change proposed by James Clear in the book Atomic Habits which are expected to be an effective strategy for increasing digital literacy.

The Atomic Habits method has been proven to have a tremendous influence in improving, changing and stabilizing a person in getting used to good things, as in research by Aulia & Robiansyah (2023) (Aulia & Robiansyah, 2023) about "Implementation of the Atomic Habits Method in developing the Religious Character of Elementary School Students" and research by Safei (2022) (Safei, 2022) about "Building Spiritual Character through the Atomic Habits Method in the Al-Qur'an Perspective". The research on the implementation of the Atomic Habits method is also relevant to the Syagif's research (Syagif, 2022) on "Strategies for Strengthening Arabic Language Literacy for Millennial Students". Based on existing research regarding the Atomic Habits method and Arabic literacy, no research has been found regarding the 4 rules for changing behavior in the book which are strategic for increasing Arabic digital literacy. In this research, the main focus is on the 4 Laws of Behavior Change in the book Atomic Habits by James Clear which the researcher explains so that they can be implemented for Arabic language learners to increase Arabic digital literacy.

Based on the description that has been presented, the researcher received the following problem formulation: 1) what is the concept of the 4 Laws of Behavior Change method in the book Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results? 2) What is the

strategy for implementing the 4 Laws of Behavior Change method in increasing digital literacy in Arabic? This article was created with the aim of analyzing the concept of the 4 Laws of Behavior Change in the book "Atomic Habits: Remarkable Results" and explaining it so that it can become a strategy that can be implemented in increasing digital literacy in Arabic.

### **METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. Literature studies involve reviewing, analyzing, and synthesizing literature relevant to the research topic. Researchers gather information from literature sources to better understand the research topic. The primary data source is the book Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results". The secondary data sources used are journal articles and websites.

The research instrument used is the researcher himself. [Literature study research instrument]. Researchers use documentation study techniques to collect data. The documentation study technique is a technique for collecting information by categorizing and classifying writing materials related to research discussions from sources such as documents, books, newspapers, magazines, and so on. The documentation used is journal articles and books.

The data analysis technique used in this study is the qualitative analysis of the Miles and Huberman model. The analysis includes three main points, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. These three activities are continuous activities before, during, and after data collection to produce a comprehensive picture called analysis.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## The Concept of the Atomic Habits Method in the book "Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results"

James Clear wrote on his book "Atomic means an extremely small amount of a thing; the single irreducible unit of a larger system. Habit means a routine or practice performed regularly; an automatic response to a specific situation. So, atomic habits are the building blocks of remarkable results". Habits are the ladder to self-improvement. This book does not emphasize how one is solely focused on one's goals. But more than that, James Clear emphasizes that we should make 1% improvements every day consistently and focus more on the missions (systems) that lead a person to their goals. Likewise, a 1% decline every day, whether a person realizes it or not, then it will make a person worse in one year, even decreasing to almost zero.

Small changes are sometimes invisible in the short term and are often underestimated and even a person will return to their old habits. Even though a good 1% change every day can be much more meaningful and have a powerful effect, especially in the long term. For example, the goal to be achieved is to increase digital literacy in Arabic

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leraning. So, what needs to be done is to focus and be consistent on the system that leads to results, such as improving habits that should and should not be done to improve digital literacy in Arabic learning.

There are four simple steps on how to build habits that are carried out by James Clear, including instructions, passion, responses, and rewards. The four steps are further classified into two phases. First, the problem phase consists of a step of guidance and passion. Second, the solution phase consists of response and reward steps. Before implementing it, the four steps need to be transformed into a more practical framework called the "Four Laws of Behaviour Change" and contains a simple set of rules for designing good habits and eliminating bad habits.

The four rules for creating good habits include: 1) The first law (instructions) by making it visible; 2) The second law (passion) by making it attractive; 3) The third law (response) by making it easy; 4) The fourth law (reward) by making it satisfying.

## The First Law (Make It Obvious) and The Implementation of Digital Literacy in Arabic Learning

The goal of this first rule (making a clue visible) is to set the time and place so clearly that with sufficient repetition, one gets the urge to do the right thing at the right time, even when one does not know the reason (Clear, 2018). The first way is to make a Habits Scorecard, which is a simple exercise of writing down a list of daily habits that can be used so that a person is more aware of their behavior or habits and write down the (+) sign for positive habits, the (-) sign for negative habits, and the (=) sign for neutral habits.

In applying this first method, it can be done as in the following table:

Table 1
Example of the application of Habits Scorecard

	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *							
+	I browse for Arabic literature							
+	I read Arabic news							
+	I open an online Arabic learning apps							
+	I study one chapter of Arabic lessons in the Rosetta Stone app							
+	I listen to Arabic podcasts							
+	I read a book I borrowed from a digital library							
+	I watch an Arabic cartoon on YouTube							
+	I write a summary of Arabic literature on Google Docs							
+	I ask questions and discussed in the online Arabic learning							
	community							
+	I share the essence of the discussion on social media							

In the first rule, James Clear also mentioned the importance of implementation intention, which is a form of planning when and where to take action. The simplest way

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to apply this strategy to a habit is to use the formula: I will [VERB] at [TIME] at [LOCATION]. Another way to use the intention of implementation is the approach created by Stanford professor, B.J. Fogg called "habit accumulation". This method is inspired by the human cycle that often does things based on what he has just done. The formula for accumulating habits is "After [NOW HABITS], I will [NEW HABITS].". The secret to creating a successful habit stack is to choose the right clues to trigger the action (Clear, 2018).

In implementing this implementation intention, it can be done as in the following table:

- I will be browsing Arabic literature for 5 minutes at 6 am in the room.
- I would read the news in Arabic after drinking coffee in the yard.
- I will study one chapter of Arabic lessons in the Rosetta Stone app after dinner in the classroom.
- I will listen to a three-minute Arabic podcast at 8 p.m. in the room.
- I will read a page of Arabic e-books at 5 p.m. in the park.
- I will write a reading summary in Google Docs at 9 p.m. in the study room.
- I shared the essence of the reading on Instagram Story at 9:30 p.m. in the classroom.

The example of applying the formula for accumulating habits from BJ. Fogg's recommendations in strengthening digital literacy in Arabic language learning are as follows:

- After the recitation of the Qur'an in the morning, I will browse Arabic literature for 5 minutes.
- After brewing coffee, I will read the news in Arabic.
- After dinner, I will study one chapter of Arabic lessons in the Rosetta Stone app.
- After establishing the 'Isha prayer', I will listen to a three-minute podcast in Arabic.
- After arriving home, I will read a page of Arabic e-book.
- I will write a reading summary in Google Docs at 9 p.m. in the study room.
- I shared the essence of the reading on Instagram Story at 9:30 p.m. in the classroom.

Designing an environment in this rule is also important to create real visual clues that attract a person to the desired habit. In addition to a supportive environment, new habits are easier to do in a new environment. Self-control over bad habits also needs to be done so that good habits continue. One of the most practical ways to get rid of bad habits is to reduce your presence in the environment with the cues that cause it (Clear, 2018)

Learning Arabic using digital technology occasionally triggers distractions. So, James

Clear in this first rule also emphasizes that we should manage distractions, namely by designing the environment. In its application, when we intend to read Arabic readings through digital technology, the first thing is to turn on silent mode so that the sound from incoming notifications does not sound and interfere with focus. Second, turn on features that help you focus, such as 'Do not disturb', where notification pop-ups will not appear on the smartphone screen. If the digital device used for learning still stores applications that often distract learning, it is recommended to uninstall these applications.

## The Second Law (Make It Attractive) and The Implementation of Digital Literacy in Arabic Learning

The second stage in forming a habit is to make a passion or motivation attractive. Passion is the engine that drives behavior. It is passion that makes people respond. What excites him is not his habits, but the change in the situation he provides. Habits are dopamine-driven feedback loops. Any behavior that is highly likely to become a habit is associated with higher dopamine levels. It is necessary to make habits interesting because actually the hope of getting a pleasant experience is what motivates a person to take action (Clear, 2018).

A person is more likely to find a behavior interesting if it is done while doing something he likes. Temptation packs are a way to apply a psychological theory called Professor David Premack's Premack Principle. The formula for this package of temptations is: 1) After [HABITS NOW], I will [HABITS I need]; 2) After [HABITS I NEED], I will [HABITS I want] (Clear, 2018).

Using the Premack Principle to strengthen digital literacy in learning Arabic can be done as shown in the following table:

### Table 2

Examples of the application of the Premack Principle in Strengthening Digital Literacy in Arabic Learning

If you want to reply to an incoming message, but you need to read the e-book:

- After taking out my smartphone, I will read a page of an Arabic ebook.
- After reading a page of the Arabic e-book, I will reply to incoming messages.

If you want to create an Instagram Story, but you need to listen to Arabic podcasts:

- After taking out my smartphone, I will listen to a 3-minute Arabic podcast.
- After listening to the Arabic podcast, I will create an Instagram Story.

If you want to watch YouTube entertainment, but you need to read Arabic news:

- After taking out my smartphone, I will read one news in Arabic.
- After reading one Arabic news, I will watch YouTube entertainment.

If you want to read a novel, but you need to write a summary of the reading to the Arabic community:

- After reading the Arabic news, I will write a summary of the news.
- After writing a summary of the news, I will read my favorite novel.

The role of the environment in forming habits is important because humans like to imitate and adapt their groups. According to Bonne, quoted by Ary H. Gunawan in Suryani research (Suryani et al., 2022), social interaction is defined as a relationship between two or more people, so that the behavior of one individual influences, changes, or improves the behavior of the other, and vice versa. One of the most effective things that can be done to build better habits is to join the culture where the desired behavior is placed. At least, humans imitate the habits of all three groups: 1) Those who are familiar with us; 2) The many; 3) The powerful. Each group offers the opportunity to benefit from the Second Rule of behaviour change and make habits more attractive (Clear, 2018).

An environment that habituates Arabic digital literacy activities can make a person want to do the same. Good Arabic language skills possessed by the environment or culture are increasingly memorable, so that Arabic digital literacy becomes a habit that you want to have. This makes literacy activities a normal thing and even must be done. So, it is important to sort out which culture we should be in. A person who wants to get used to Arabic digital literacy activities, he can join an Arabic literacy community or an online Arabic language course, so that the opportunity to consistently read and write Arabic is greater and more effective.

Habits become attractive when we associate them with positive feelings. The strategy of creating a motivational ritual is to do something that can be enjoyed just before a difficult habit and all that is needed is a slight change in mindset. A simple example is changing one word "must" to "have the opportunity to do" (Clear, 2018).

Instead of saying and instilling in ourself "I have to read the Arabic text today", it is better to say "I have the opportunity to read the Arabic text after eating, then I have the opportunity to write the essence of the Arabic text that I read, then I have the opportunity to share the essence on my social media". It is a simple way that can be implemented to make Arabic literacy activities in the digital space seem more interesting.

### The Third Law (Make It Easy)

The third stage in forming a habit is to make a response easy. Sometimes focusing too much on thinking about the best approach makes a person never come into action. In motion is making plans, strategizing, and learning, but it doesn't come to fruition. While action is a type of behavior that gives results. If you want to master the

habit, the key is to start with a loop, not imagine the perfection of Arabic in the digital space seems more interesting(Clear, 2018).

The first strategy discussed in the book Atomic Habits in the third rule is the law of the least effort. One of the most effective ways to reduce friction associated with habits is to learn to design environments to make clues more real(Clear, 2018). As Japanese companies do that look for all friction points in the manufacturing process and eliminate them, they increase revenue and benefits for customers. Equally, when eliminating the friction points that absorb time and energy, one can gain more with less effort.

In this rule, the author first emphasizes to increase the frequency of practice, not to increase planning. Action is more important, than just planning for the future. In terms of strengthening digital literacy in learning Arabic, one can implement simple things, such as when opening a smartphone, as well as opening an Arabic e-book. When opening an Arabic e-book, at the same time opening an Arabic dictionary to look for vocabulary that he does not know and write down the new vocabulary on the application or note feature on the smartphone. This method is expected to reduce the habit of procrastination, can increase curiosity, vocabulary is more attached to the head because curiosity is directly answered with action from oneself.

The next strategy in this rule is to prepare the best environment for the future. This is a simple way to get good habits on track with the least amount of obstacles. So, when there are fewer obstacles, habits become easy(Clear, 2018). In this case, habits can be implemented such as rearranging digital devices and learning devices that have been used. Put it back on the study desk or in a place that is easy to see and reach again, so that when the eyes see these digital learning devices, there is a desire to open them again.

The Two-Minute Rule is the next most effective way to counter the tendency(Clear, 2018). The Two-Minute Rule doesn't emphasize new habits to do too much in a short time, but rather to execute them immediately in the easiest way possible and try them out for a short duration first. Once it becomes an easy "opening habit", it naturally leads a person to a more productive path.

To implement this Two-Minute Rule in strengthening Arabic digital literacy, it can be illustrated in the following table.

Table 3
Example of the application of the Two-Minute Rule

Very Easy		Easy		Moderate		Hard		Very Hard	
Watch	short	Watch	Arabic	Watch	Arabic	Watch	Arabic	Watch	Arabic
Arabic		cartoon		lectures		news		movie	
conversa	tion								
Write	a	Write	a	Write	one	Write	a five-	Write ar	n Arabic
sentence		paragraph		hundred words		thousand-word		book	
						article			
Open		Write article		Summar	y the	Converting		Create	Arabic
smartpho	one			points	of	points	into	content	on
				material		visual o	content	Instagra	am

Furthermore, what needs to be considered to form a habit is to optimize the choice of results (Clear, 2018). Mastering the decisive moment in the future. Commitment keepers also increase the chances that someone will do the right thing in the future. By utilizing applications on gadgets to remind people what to do, one can create an inevitable environment. Nowadays, there are many applications that can help and control our focus in activities, such as Focus-to-do, FLIP, Study Bunny, Forest, Focus Plant.

## The Fourth Law (Make It Satisfying)

Every habit brings results not only one in line with time. With bad habits, immediate results usually feel good, even though the end result feels bad. With good habits the opposite happens: the immediate result cannot be enjoyed, but the end result feels good. The fourth step in forming a habit is to make a reward satisfying. One wants the benefits of good habits. However, these results are rarely at the top of the list at decisive moments. The best way to do this is to add a little element of direct pleasure to habits that will provide long-term rewards (Clear, 2018).

The most important thing in creating a habit of staying is to feel successful, even if the success is small. The way to implement in strengthening digital literacy is that we can give an award to ourselves or someone who learns Arabic something that they like, but does not contradict what is the goal. An example is that after listening to an Arabic podcast, students are allowed to create an Instagram Story related to the podcast they just listened to. This makes students feel that there are satisfactory results from what has been done. Another pleasure is also obtained from the number of viewers of their Instagram Story or the comments directed at their posts.

The next one is the habit monitor. A habit tracker is a simple way to measure whether a person is doing a habit. The most basic format is to provide a calendar and cross dates each time you maintain a routine. The mantra "don't break the chain" is also a powerful mantra to instill in the mind that the habits that have been done must be continued to get impressive results. The benefits of this habit monitor include: 1) The habit monitor is visible; 2) Habit monitors are interesting; 3) Habit monitoring is satisfactory.

In implementing it, students can cross out the date on the calendar every time they finish watching reading a page of an Arabic e-book, or move the paperclip from one glass to another after they have finished reviewing and summarizing the core of the reading. Examples of habit monitoring are visible, so that it motivates students to continue to maintain their habits, and do not even want to break the chain of their habits.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Digital literacy has an important role in strengthening literacy in learning Arabic, where Arabic is a language that has a high existence in the world. In order to develop 21st century skills, an approach strategy is needed so that how Arabic digital literacy looks, is

interesting, easy, and satisfying. In this case, the four rules of behavior change carried out by James Clear can be an effective strategy to become a habituation step and to achieve the goal of strengthening digital literacy. Of the four principles of Atomic Habits that have been described by researchers to be a simple strategy, it is hoped that there will be further research to be tested in various age groups, places, or in other language strengthening.

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