



Critical Analysis of the Implementation of *Thariqah As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah* in Enhancing Oral Competence in Arabic Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study aims to critically analyze the characteristics, strengths, weaknesses, and effectiveness of implementing *Thariqah As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah* (Audiolingual method) in Arabic language learning. Despite its long-standing use, challenges remain in its application, which often falls into mechanistic processes without deep meaningful understanding.

Design/methods/approach The research method employed is descriptive qualitative with a library research approach. Data were collected through scientific literature, journals, and relevant textbooks, then analyzed using content analysis techniques.

Findings – The results indicate that this method is highly effective in forming accurate pronunciation habits and mastering standardized sentence patterns through repetition techniques (stimulus-response).

Research implications – However, its success heavily depends on the educator's creativity in modifying drills to avoid boredom and the ability to integrate visual media and language laboratory technology. This study recommends a swift transition from pattern drills to contextual communication to ensure students do not merely "mimic" but are able to communicate spontaneously and functionally.

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Introduction

Arabic language instruction in formal educational institutions currently faces significant challenges, particularly concerning students' low oral proficiency amidst the dominance of a grammar-centered curriculum (*Qawa'id*) (A'inul Haq, 2021). Many graduates of schools and *madrasahs* demonstrate proficiency in comprehending written texts yet encounter substantial inhibition when required to communicate actively (Eragamreddy, 2024). This phenomenon is often attributed to the selection of instructional methods that are misaligned with students' practical communication needs (Irsyad, 2020).

Historically, one method designed to strengthen oral skills is the *Thariqah As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah*, or the Audiolingual method (Atabik et al., 2023). This approach is rooted in the behavioral assumption that language is a habit-bound behavior formed through repetition and reinforcement (stimulus-response-reinforcement). Although widely recognized in applied linguistics, its implementation in modern Arabic language learning is frequently perceived as rigid and mechanistic, leading many educators to abandon its use (Hania et al., 2025).

Prior studies have extensively discussed the general effectiveness of the audiolingual method (Hasibuan & Zainuddin, 2024). However, a research gap remains regarding the modification of its procedural steps to move beyond rote mimicry and serve as a foundation for spontaneous communicative competence. A recurring issue



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is the lack of pedagogical understanding concerning the integration of pattern drills with students' real-life contexts.

This article aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of the *As-Syam'iyyah As-Syafahiyah* method in Arabic language instruction. Distinct from general literature reviews, this study attempts a critical synthesis of the method's procedural steps to identify a more dynamic application model. The findings are expected to offer strategic recommendations for Arabic language educators to overcome the stagnation of students' oral proficiency through the utilization of modified audiolingual techniques.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach through library research. Within this study, library research extends beyond mere reference collection to involve a profound analysis of literature relevant to Arabic language instructional methods. Data collection was conducted systematically through the following stages: (1) Source Identification: Data were retrieved from digital databases, including Google Scholar, digital libraries, and university library repositories. (2) Inclusion Criteria: Selected sources consist of literature specifically addressing the *Thariqah As-Syam'iyyah As-Syafahiyah* (Audiolingual method), success factors in foreign language acquisition, and contemporary challenges in Arabic language learning. (3) Analysis Technique: The collected data were analyzed using the Content Analysis technique. The researchers conducted a rigorous review of theories surrounding the *As-Syam'iyyah As-Syafahiyah* method to produce a cohesive conceptual framework regarding its characteristics, advantages, limitations, and practical applications in Arabic instruction. This approach was selected to provide a comprehensive description of the philosophical and practical foundations of the method, ensuring its effective application within the current educational context.

Results

Based on the literature review, *Thariqah As-Syam'iyyah As-Syafahiyah*, or the Audiolingual method, is defined as a comprehensive language teaching framework that emphasizes oral practice prior to transitioning to written texts. This method possesses a robust historical foundation, having been significantly developed at institutions such as the University of Michigan in 1939 to professionally train foreign language educators. Theoretically, the method is grounded in Structural Linguistics, which perceives language as a collection of sentence patterns utilized by native speakers in daily interactions. The fundamental assumption of this method is that language acquisition is a habit-forming process developed through consistent simulation and repetition.

The operational characteristics of this method focus on the balanced mastery of the four language skills, following a pedagogical sequence that begins with listening, followed by speaking, reading, and finally writing. In practice, sentence models are presented in conversational forms to be memorized through pattern practice, adhering to the stimulus-response-reinforcement cycle. The primary focus of instruction lies in practical exercises and word arrangements without formal grammar instruction in the initial stages. The educator serves as the central figure of classroom activities, controlling all stimuli, while the use of language laboratories and visual media serves as primary support in creating an authentic linguistic environment (Zikrillah et al., 2025).

Despite its effectiveness in enabling learners to master standardized sentence patterns and achieve valid pronunciation, several procedural limitations were identified. The primary weakness lies in its highly mechanistic nature, where students tend to "parrot" or react without a profound understanding of the uttered sentences. Furthermore, the method offers limited space for spontaneous speech, as students are exclusively trained to respond to specific, pre-planned stimuli. Consequently, the success of this method is heavily contingent upon the presence of an educator who is proficient, dynamic, and adept at managing classroom dynamics to prevent monotony.

Table 1. Analysis of Characteristics, Strengths, and Weaknesses of the Audiolingual Method

Analytical Aspect	Research Findings
Theoretical Foundation	Based on descriptive Structural Linguistics and Behavioral Psychology (habit formation).
Primary Focus	Emphasizes listening and speaking skills before reading and writing.
Instructional Technique	Utilization of pattern drills through a stimulus, response, and reinforcement cycle.
Primary Strengths	Students achieve accurate (valid) pronunciation and rapid mastery of standardized sentence patterns.
Primary Weaknesses	Instruction tends to be mechanistic ("parroting") and lacks opportunities for spontaneous utterance.
HR Requirements	Requires highly skilled, dynamic, and proficient educators to manage the classroom.

Discussion

The analysis of the aforementioned findings indicates that the stagnation of students' speaking proficiency in Arabic is often rooted in the educators' inability to manage the transition from mechanical drills to meaningful communication. As elucidated in the findings, the tendency for students to "parrot" is the most significant risk associated with *Thariqah As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah*. This study argues that to mitigate this, the reinforcement stage must be modified. Educators should not merely appreciate phonological accuracy but must immediately encourage students to apply newly learned patterns within real-life contexts relevant to their experiences. Thus, repetition ceases to be a hollow exercise and instead becomes the foundation for functional communicative competence.

Furthermore, the imperative for utilizing language laboratories and recordings within this method presents a significant opportunity for integrating modern technology into Arabic instruction. In the current digital era, the dependency on "highly skilled and dynamic" teachers can be alleviated by utilizing ICT-based learning media or Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications capable of providing consistent auditory stimulation. The researcher observes that the strategic use of varied visual and audio media can minimize the boredom frequently resulting from monotonous pattern repetition. This integration allows the core principles of audiolingualism—namely the reinforcement of listening and speaking skills—to be maintained while being delivered in a more dynamic and interactive format for contemporary learners (Safira & Qodir, 2025).

Finally, the sequence of language skills that prioritizes listening and speaking serves as a solution to the long-standing dominance of reading-based methods that have hindered students' oral proficiency. This study analyzes that practical failures in the field often occur because educators teach conversational material (*hiwar*) through text-reading methods. By restoring the essence of the *As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah* method—specifically familiarizing sounds before letters—the psychological barriers to student speech can be reduced. When implemented with rigorous yet creative error control, this method ensures that students possess the confidence in pronunciation required before being burdened by complex grammatical rules.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *Thariqah As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah*, or the Audiolingual method, serves as a highly effective instructional instrument for building the foundation of oral skills (*maharah al-istima'* and *maharah al-kalam*) in Arabic language learners. Its primary strength lies in its ability to facilitate accurate pronunciation and the mastery of standardized sentence patterns through systematic habituation. However, the study also reveals that implementing this method in its pure form without modification risks creating a mechanistic learning process, where students only respond to stimuli within a limited scope and without deep comprehension. As an implication of these findings, the researcher suggests that Arabic language educators should no longer apply this method rigidly as a mere "parroting" exercise. Educators must act as creative facilitators, integrating visual media and modern language laboratory technology to maintain student motivation. Instructional steps should be directed toward a rapid transition from pattern drills to the use of language in authentic communicative contexts. Consequently, *Thariqah As-Syam'iyah As-Syafahiyah* remains relevant as a solution for overcoming speaking barriers in students, provided it is combined with a more communicative approach that is adaptive to current developments in educational technology.

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