



## Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's Linguistic Thought: Implications for Arabic Language Teaching for Non-Native Speakers

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – This study analyzes the fundamental concepts of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought and examines their implications for the development of curriculum, methods, and evaluation in Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers.

**Design/methods/approach** – The research used a qualitative descriptive-analytical design grounded in biographical study and library research, the study examined an-Naqah's primary works and relevant secondary literature through content analysis.

**Findings** – The findings show that his framework is rooted in Arabic linguistics, applied linguistics, and language learning theory, with communicative language use positioned at the center of instruction. The study also finds that the four language skills are treated as integrated competencies, while grammar functions as a supporting element, and that needs analysis, learner characteristics, communicative performance, and psychological variables are central to effective Arabic instruction. The study is limited by its reliance on conceptual and literature-based analysis, without direct classroom testing of an-Naqah's model. Further research is recommended to examine its implementation in diverse educational settings and to evaluate its effectiveness through empirical and mixed-method designs.

**Research Implications** – These findings indicate that an-Naqah offers a practical paradigm for shifting Arabic pedagogy from rigid structural-grammatical instruction toward a more functional, contextual, and applied model.

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## Introduction

Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers remains a critical area of concern in global education because it supports access to religious texts, academic discourse, and intercultural communication (Wahab et al., 2018). In many contexts, however, Arabic instruction is still dominated by rigid structural and grammatical routines that do not adequately develop communicative competence (Rahmatan et al., 2026). This mismatch becomes increasingly problematic in modern educational environments that demand learner autonomy, contextual meaning-making, and practical language use (Imawan et al., 2026). As a result, there is a growing need for pedagogical frameworks that can integrate linguistic accuracy with functional communication (Arifin et al., 2024). In this regard, the thought of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah offers a timely conceptual basis for rethinking Arabic language teaching (Munir, 2022).

Previous studies have shown that modern Arabic language education increasingly values student-centered, communicative, and technology-assisted learning models. Research on Thu'aimah's ideas indicates that contemporary instruction should move beyond teacher-dominated transmission toward active learner engagement and media-rich practices. Such findings suggest that Arabic pedagogy can be adapted to the demands of digital-era education without losing its disciplinary foundations (Izzati et al., 2025). At the same time, these studies reinforce the idea that



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communicative orientation is not merely methodological but epistemological in shaping how Arabic is taught and learned. This body of work provides an important starting point for examining broader theoretical foundations of Arabic language instruction (Munir, 2022).

Other studies have focused on the practical implementation of communicative and integrative approaches in Arabic classrooms. An integrative curriculum in a pesantren-based institution was found to create contextual learning, strengthen grammatical understanding, and increase students' confidence in using Arabic (Roziqin et al., 2025). Similarly, the Wafa Method was reported to support active and enjoyable learning, although its communicative and contextual dimensions still required further development (Apriliani, 2025). These findings indicate that successful Arabic instruction depends on more than content mastery alone, since classroom atmosphere and learning design also shape outcomes. They also show that method selection must be aligned with communicative goals rather than limited to repetition and memorization.

Further evidence suggests that speaking competence occupies a central place in Arabic language learning theory and practice. Studies grounded in mahārat al-kalām emphasize that oral proficiency should guide the design of curriculum, teaching methods, and instructional strategies (Hady, 2019). Empirical work has also shown that communicative approaches can significantly improve students' Arabic proficiency and their ability to use the language in authentic situations (Arifin et al., 2024). In addition, communicative materials developed for university learners have been shown to enhance speaking ability, confidence, and learner satisfaction (Zubair, 2024). Together, these studies confirm that oral communication is not an ancillary skill but a core objective of Arabic instruction (Murtadho et al., 2025).

The literature also highlights the theoretical depth of communicative language teaching in Arabic education. Research on the communicative thought of Thu'aimah and an-Naqah identifies essential instructional elements such as message, sender, receiver, and media, as well as metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies (Munir, 2022). Other studies have shown that the 3Cs approach supports active, contextual, social, and flexible learning while also strengthening learner autonomy (Almelhes & Alsaiani, 2024). At the same time, research in some higher-education settings has found that communicative language teaching is still not implemented consistently, despite official recommendations and its strong pedagogical relevance (Ajape et al., 2023). These results suggest that the field has recognized the value of communicative theory, but classroom practice remains uneven.

In addition to communicative pedagogy, several studies point to the importance of linguistic analysis and translation in Arabic learning. Amin al-Khuli's linguistic approach demonstrates how attention to internal textual structure and external context can preserve meaning and interpretive objectivity (Ekaputra, 2025). Related research also shows that translation, when used judiciously and matched to learner competence, may support communicative development rather than hinder it (Adil, 2020). These findings broaden the discussion of Arabic teaching by showing that communication, interpretation, and language mediation are interconnected. They also imply that Arabic pedagogy should be sensitive to both meaning formation and functional language use.

Despite these contributions, important gaps remain in the existing literature. Most previous studies emphasize methods, materials, or classroom outcomes, while fewer examine the foundational linguistic thought that underpins those pedagogical choices (Munir, 2022). In particular, the implications of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's ideas for

curriculum design, instructional methods, and assessment have not been sufficiently synthesized across studies (Hady, 2019). There is also a tendency to treat communicative teaching as a practical technique without fully examining its theoretical grounding within applied linguistics (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). Therefore, a more systematic analysis is needed to connect an-Naqah's linguistic thought with the development of Arabic teaching for non-native speakers (Izzati et al., 2025).

This study aims to analyze the fundamental concepts of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought and their implications for the development of curriculum, methods, and evaluation in Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers. By positioning an-Naqah's ideas within applied linguistics, the study seeks to clarify how communicative principles can be translated into coherent pedagogical design. It also aims to provide a conceptual bridge between theory and instructional practice in Arabic language education. The expected contribution of this study is to enrich scholarly understanding of Arabic pedagogy beyond rigid structural-grammatical paradigms. In practical terms, the study offers a framework for designing more communicative, contextual, and effective Arabic learning systems.

## Methods

This study employed a qualitative, descriptive-analytical research design oriented to a biographical and library-based examination of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought. The research combined a focused biographical inquiry with systematic library research to locate, select, and interpret primary writings by an-Naqah alongside relevant secondary literature.

Data collection proceeded through a documented sequence of steps: (1) comprehensive inventory and classification of primary works and supporting literature, (2) critical close reading of selected texts, (3) systematic extraction and recording of key concepts and terminologies, and (4) thematic categorization of extracted items into analytic domains such as theory, curriculum, methods, and evaluation. Documentary materials were obtained from printed and digital archives, institutional repositories, journal databases, and published monographs, and their bibliographic details were managed through reference-management software to ensure traceability. Textual data were prepared for analysis by creating coded excerpts and thematic memos in a secure digital workspace to facilitate transparency and replicability.

Data analysis followed a qualitative content-analysis protocol comprising data reduction, data display, and interpretive analysis; reduction involved selection and condensation of relevant passages, display involved organization into descriptive tables and narrative summaries, and interpretation involved mapping findings onto applied-linguistics and second-language-acquisition frameworks. To support analytic rigor, coding was conducted iteratively with cross-checking between the author and an independent coder, and disagreements were resolved through discussion and reference to source texts.

Reliability and validity procedures included source triangulation across primary and secondary materials, maintenance of an audit trail documenting analytic decisions, and peer review of preliminary categorizations by two field-informed colleagues. Ethical considerations focused on accurate representation of authorial texts and correct bibliographic attribution rather than human-subject protections. Overall, the chosen methodology and procedures were designed to produce a systematic, transparent, and verifiable reconstruction of an-Naqah's linguistic propositions and their implications for curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in Arabic language teaching.

## Results

The findings of this study delineate a comprehensive architectural framework of Arabic language pedagogy as conceptualized by Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah. This framework is characterized by a sophisticated synthesis of classical Arabic linguistic traditions and modern applied linguistic theories, particularly within the realm of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The following analysis is structured into five core dimensions: first, the integration of theoretical foundations comprising linguistics, applied linguistics, and learning theories; second, an exploration of an-Naqah's intellectual biography and his role in bridging traditional and contemporary methodologies; third, the fundamental shift from rule-based instruction to a communicative, skill-integrated approach; fourth, his specific contributions to curriculum design and needs analysis; and finally, the incorporation of cognitive and affective psychological factors into the Arabic instructional system. Collectively, these results underscore a transition toward a learner-centered, functional paradigm in Arabic language education.

### 3.1. Integrated Theoretical Framework of Arabic Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, and Second Language Acquisition in Arabic Language Pedagogy

The theoretical framework of this study is constructed upon three interrelated domains, namely Arabic linguistics, applied linguistics, and language learning theory, which collectively provide a comprehensive foundation for analyzing Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought. These domains are conceptualized as an integrated system that connects language structure, language use, and language learning processes within a unified pedagogical perspective. Such integration is essential for understanding how linguistic knowledge can be transformed into effective instructional practices in Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers. The framework enables a systematic examination of the relationship between theoretical constructs and pedagogical applications. It also positions an-Naqah's thought within contemporary debates in applied linguistics and language education.

Arabic linguistics constitutes the first foundational component, encompassing phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics as the core subsystems of the Arabic language (Ekaputra, 2025). These components provide a structural and functional description of how the Arabic language operates at different levels of analysis. In language teaching contexts, Arabic linguistics serves both as a normative reference for correctness and as a descriptive basis for understanding authentic language use (Wahab et al., 2018). This dual function allows linguistic knowledge to inform the selection, sequencing, and presentation of instructional content. As a result, Arabic linguistics becomes an essential foundation for developing systematic and coherent teaching materials.

Applied linguistics represents the second component and functions as a mediating domain that links linguistic theory with pedagogical practice. It addresses practical issues in language teaching, including curriculum design, instructional strategies, material development, and assessment systems (Munir, 2022). Through applied linguistics, abstract linguistic concepts are operationalized into teachable and learnable units. This field also emphasizes the importance of contextual and sociocultural factors, such as learner needs, communicative purposes, and educational settings. In this regard, applied linguistics provides the methodological and conceptual tools necessary to translate theory into practice, which is central to an-Naqah's intellectual orientation.

The third component, language learning theory, particularly second language acquisition, provides a psychological and pedagogical basis for understanding how learners acquire language competence. It highlights communicative approaches, skill integration, and contextualized learning as essential elements of effective instruction (Murtadho et al., 2025). This perspective views language learning as an active and dynamic process involving cognitive processing, affective engagement, and social interaction. It also supports learner-centered approaches that prioritize meaningful communication and real-life language use. These principles align closely with contemporary trends in language pedagogy and reinforce the relevance of an-Naqah's framework.

Collectively, these three domains form an integrated theoretical framework that bridges structural, functional, and pedagogical perspectives in Arabic language teaching. The framework allows for a holistic understanding of language as both a system and a communicative practice, as well as a subject of instruction and acquisition. It also provides a robust analytical basis for examining the contributions of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah within the field of applied linguistics. Ultimately, this integrated approach underscores the relevance of his ideas for the development of curriculum, teaching methodologies, and assessment models in Arabic language education for non-native speakers.

### 3.2. Biography and Intellectual Background of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah

Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah is identified as a prominent figure in applied linguistics and Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers (Munir, 2022). His academic background is influenced by both classical Arabic linguistic traditions and modern linguistic and pedagogical theories (Hady, 2019). He has been involved in curriculum development and Arabic language education at national and international levels (Izzati et al., 2025). His intellectual orientation integrates structural, functional, and communicative linguistics with second language acquisition theories (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). His work is consistently مرتبط with efforts to improve Arabic language teaching practices (Munir, 2022).

### 3.3. Fundamental Concepts of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's Linguistic Thought

Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought places communicative language use at the center of Arabic learning (Murtadho et al., 2025). His framework identifies the mastery of four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—as the primary objectives of instruction (Hady, 2019). These skills are presented as integrated competencies that must be developed simultaneously in the learning process (Roziqin et al., 2025). Grammar is positioned as a supporting component to enhance accuracy rather than as the ultimate goal of learning (Hady, 2019). This orientation reflects a shift from rule-based instruction toward skill-based language use.

The communicative and functional approach is consistently emphasized in his framework, particularly in relation to the use of language in real-life situations (Arifin et al., 2024). Language materials are selected based on their relevance to learners' communicative needs and social context (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). Needs analysis is identified as a key procedure in determining learning objectives, content selection, and instructional sequencing (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). Evaluation is also included as part of the instructional system, focusing on both linguistic knowledge and communicative performance (Munir, 2022). These components collectively describe the structure of an-Naqah's linguistic framework in Arabic language teaching.

### 3.4. Contributions of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah to Applied Linguistics

An-Naqah's contributions to applied linguistics are reflected in the connection between linguistic theory and language teaching practice (Munir, 2022). His framework incorporates linguistic insights into the design of curriculum, teaching materials, instructional strategies, and evaluation systems (Izzati et al., 2025). Linguistic theory is presented as a foundation for organizing language content and structuring learning progression (Ekaputra, 2025). His work also includes the application of both classical and modern linguistic perspectives in Arabic education (Hady, 2019). These elements indicate the role of linguistics as a basis for pedagogical development.

In addition, the communicative approach is emphasized as a central component of Arabic language teaching (Murtadho et al., 2025). Instructional practices are oriented toward learner participation, interaction, and functional language use (Arifin et al., 2024). Needs analysis is consistently identified as a basis for curriculum development, particularly in relation to learner characteristics, proficiency levels, and learning objectives (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). His contributions also include the positioning of Arabic linguistics within educational contexts rather than purely theoretical domains (Ekaputra, 2025). These findings show the scope of an-Naqah's role in applied linguistics.

### 3.5. Integration of Psychological Aspects in Arabic Language Learning

An-Naqah's framework includes psychological aspects as part of Arabic language learning (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). Learning is described as an active process in which new information is connected to prior knowledge. Cognitive factors are identified in relation to how learners process and organize linguistic input (Zubair, 2024). Readiness and prior knowledge are presented as elements influencing the learning process (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). These aspects are included as components of language learning conditions.

Affective and strategic dimensions are also identified within the framework. Motivation and learner attitudes are described as factors influencing engagement in learning activities (Adil, 2020). Metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation are included as part of the learning process (Munir, 2022). Socio-affective strategies, including collaboration and interaction, are also presented as elements of classroom practice (Munir, 2022). Needs analysis is linked to learner-centered instruction by incorporating psychological characteristics such as interest, readiness, and learning capacity (Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024).

Table 1. Analytical Synthesis of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's Linguistic Framework

Dimension	Core Concepts	Key Characteristics	Pedagogical Implications
Theoretical Framework	Analytical Synthesis of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's Linguistic Framework	Integration of structure, use, and learning processes	Foundation for curriculum, methods, and assessment
Intellectual Background	Classical & modern synthesis	Integration of structural, functional, communicative linguistics	Bridge between tradition and modern pedagogy
Fundamental Concepts	Four skills integration, communicative focus	Grammar as support, not goal	Shift to skill-based and communicative teaching
Applied Linguistics Contribution	Curriculum, materials, evaluation	Needs analysis, contextual learning	Learner-centered curriculum design
Psychological Integration	Cognitive, affective, strategic factors	Motivation, metacognition, interaction	Holistic and learner-responsive instruction

The table above presents a synthesized overview of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic framework across five major dimensions. It illustrates how his thought systematically integrates theoretical, pedagogical, and psychological components into a coherent model of Arabic language teaching. The framework demonstrates a clear shift from traditional grammar-oriented instruction toward a communicative, learner-centered paradigm. Each dimension contributes to a unified system in which linguistic knowledge, instructional design, and learner factors are interconnected. This synthesis highlights the comprehensiveness and applicability of an-Naqah's framework in contemporary Arabic language education.

## Discussion

Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought is relevant to the present study because it addresses the long-standing tension between structural-grammatical instruction and communicative language teaching in Arabic education. Prior studies have shown that Arabic pedagogy increasingly requires approaches that are learner-centered, context-sensitive, and functionally oriented (Izzati et al., 2025; Murtadho et al., 2025). At the same time, research has indicated that speaking competence, needs analysis, and communicative performance remain decisive elements in effective Arabic learning (Hady, 2019; Almelhes & Alsaiani, 2024). The present discussion is therefore situated within a broader literature that positions Arabic not only as a linguistic system but also as a medium for meaningful communication and academic use (Wahab et al., 2018). Against this background, an-Naqah's framework provides a conceptual basis for rethinking Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers (Munir, 2022).

The main findings show that an-Naqah's thought is organized around communicative language use, integrated language skills, and the functional role of grammar. His framework consistently places listening, speaking, reading, and writing as interrelated competencies, while grammar is treated as a supporting instrument rather than the final instructional goal (Hady, 2019; Roziqin et al., 2025). The findings also show that needs analysis, learner characteristics, and contextual relevance are central in the selection of content and learning sequence (Almelhes & Alsaiani, 2024). In addition, evaluation is not limited to formal accuracy but extends to actual communicative performance and practical language use (Munir, 2022). These results indicate that an-Naqah's model is both pedagogically structured and communicatively oriented.

The findings are consistent with previous studies that emphasized the relevance of communicative and learner-centered approaches in Arabic education. Research on Thu'aimah's ideas also concluded that modern Arabic instruction should prioritize active learner participation, communicative practice, and instructional flexibility (Izzati et al., 2025). Likewise, studies on the communicative approach reported significant gains in Arabic proficiency, oral confidence, and authentic language use (Arifin et al., 2024; Zubair, 2024). The present findings also align with the study of the 3Cs approach, which highlighted active, contextual, and socially supported learning as effective for Arabic learners (Almelhes & Alsaiani, 2024). However, unlike studies that focus mainly on classroom method, the present study shows that an-Naqah's contribution lies in the deeper theoretical organization of those methods within applied linguistics.

The results further suggest that an-Naqah's thought is significant because it provides a bridge between linguistic theory and pedagogical design. This is visible in the way linguistic knowledge is linked to curriculum development, instructional material selection, and assessment planning (Izzati et al., 2025). Such a connection is

important because previous work has shown that Arabic teaching often fails when theory is detached from classroom practice or when instruction remains overly formalistic (Ajape et al., 2023). The present findings support the view that applied linguistics is not only a methodological field but also a framework for organizing educational decisions in a principled way (Munir, 2022). In this sense, an-Naqah's thought strengthens the scientific basis of Arabic language teaching by making pedagogy theoretically accountable.

Another important finding is the centrality of psychological factors in an-Naqah's framework. The results show that cognitive readiness, prior knowledge, motivation, and learner attitude are treated as conditions that shape language learning outcomes (Zubair, 2024; Adil, 2020). This is consistent with previous studies that reported the importance of socio-affective and metacognitive strategies in communicative Arabic learning (Munir, 2022). The emphasis on collaboration, planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation also suggests that an-Naqah's framework supports learner autonomy rather than passive reception. These findings indicate that successful Arabic teaching depends not only on content and method, but also on how instruction accommodates the psychological realities of learners.

The significance of these findings should be interpreted with some caution because the study is theoretical and synthesizes existing literature rather than testing an-Naqah's model empirically in classrooms. Although the results are supported by related studies on communicative teaching, integrative curricula, and speaking instruction, the implementation of these principles may vary across institutions and learner populations (Roziqin et al., 2025; Murtadho et al., 2025). The findings also do not directly measure learning outcomes, so their practical effectiveness remains inferential rather than experimental. In addition, the dominance of communicative orientation does not eliminate the need for grammatical accuracy, which continues to matter in formal Arabic instruction (Hady, 2019). Therefore, the discussion should be read as a conceptual clarification of an-Naqah's thought rather than a direct validation of its classroom effects.

The implications of the findings are clear for curriculum, methodology, and assessment in Arabic teaching for non-native speakers. Curriculum designers should position communicative competence, needs analysis, and skill integration as central organizing principles (Almelhes & Alsaiani, 2024; Munir, 2022). Teachers should adopt instructional practices that promote meaningful interaction, contextual language use, and balanced development of the four language skills (Arifin et al., 2024; Zubair, 2024). Assessment should likewise include both linguistic accuracy and communicative ability so that evaluation reflects actual language performance (Munir, 2022). More broadly, an-Naqah's thought offers a practical paradigm for shifting Arabic pedagogy from rigid structural-grammatical instruction toward an applied-linguistic model that is more responsive to learner needs and contemporary educational demands (Izzati et al., 2025; Adil, 2020).

## Conclusion

This study aimed to analyze the fundamental concepts of Mahmud Kamil an-Naqah's linguistic thought and examine their implications for the development of curriculum, methods, and evaluation in Arabic language teaching for non-native speakers. The findings show that an-Naqah's framework is grounded in Arabic linguistics, applied linguistics, and language learning theory, with communicative language use placed at the center of instruction. His thought emphasizes the integrated development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while grammar functions as a supporting

element rather than the final objective. The study also shows that needs analysis, learner characteristics, communicative performance, and psychological variables are essential components of effective Arabic instruction. Overall, an-Naqah's ideas provide a coherent paradigm that shifts Arabic pedagogy from rigid structural-grammatical instruction toward a more functional and applied model. The significance of these findings lies in their contribution to the theoretical and practical development of Arabic language education for non-native speakers. They indicate that curriculum design should prioritize communicative competence, contextual relevance, and balanced skill integration, while teaching methods should foster interaction and meaningful language use. Assessment should also be broadened so that it measures not only grammatical knowledge but also actual communicative ability and learner progress in authentic situations. The main limitation of this study is that it is based on conceptual and literature-based analysis, so it does not directly test an-Naqah's model through classroom experimentation or longitudinal implementation. Further research is therefore recommended to examine the application of his framework in different educational settings, compare its effectiveness with other pedagogical models, and evaluate its impact on learner outcomes through empirical and mixed-method studies.

## **Declarations**

### ***Author contribution statement***

Ahmad Munawir Hamid conceptualized the study, designed the research framework, conducted the data analysis, and drafted the original manuscript. Haniah contributed to the development of the theoretical framework, supervised the research process, and critically revised the manuscript for important intellectual content. Amrah Kasim contributed to data collection, literature review, data organization, and assisted in editing and finalizing the manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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### ***Data availability statement***

The data supporting the findings of this study are derived from published sources, including books, journal articles, and academic documents. All data used in this study are available within the article and its referenced sources. No new empirical datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

### ***Declaration of interests statement***

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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