

The Interventional Role of Arabic Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools' Arabic Drama Instructional Classes in Ilorin, Nigeria

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Abstract

Arabic drama is a distinct literary genre crucial in enhancing students' linguistic proficiency, cultural understanding, and interpretative skills. However, in many Nigerian secondary schools, particularly in Ilorin, Arabic drama remains underutilised due to the limited pedagogical capacity of Arabic teachers and insufficient instructional integration. This paper investigates the interventional role of Arabic teachers in facilitating the teaching and learning of Arabic drama in senior secondary schools. This research explores how Arabic teachers function beyond traditional instruction by identifying student needs, adapting instructional strategies, and promoting cultural and performance-based learning within Arabic drama classes. The paper adopts a conceptual-descriptive approach, relying on an extensive review of academic literature, curriculum documents, drama texts and expert reflections. The findings reveal that qualified Arabic teachers significantly enhance students' engagement and performance in Arabic drama by acting as facilitators, directors, counsellors and cultural interpreters. Teachers who integrate performance techniques, differentiated instruction and contextualised drama content contribute to improved language fluency, creative expression and cultural literacy among learners. The paper concludes that integrating qualified Arabic teachers into drama instruction is essential for enriching Arabic language education. It contributes a conceptual framework for rethinking Arabic drama pedagogy. It highlights the need for curriculum reform, teacher training and institutional support to optimise the interventional capacity of Arabic educators in Nigerian secondary schools.

Keywords: Arabic Drama Pedagogy; Teacher Intervention Strategies; Cognitive Engagement; Language Learning; Arabic Instruction;

INTRODUCTION

Arabic is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with over 422 million speakers globally and official status in more than 25 countries (Hakem, 2022).

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Arabic is significant in Nigeria due to its religious and cultural relevance among the Muslim population and as an integral component of the curriculum in many secondary schools, particularly in northern and southwestern states such as Kwara. However, despite its institutional presence, student proficiency in Arabic literature, particularly in drama, remains critically low, with recent surveys revealing that over 65% of senior secondary school students in Arabic classes struggle with comprehension and performance in literary genres like drama (GARBA, n.d.). As a subgenre of Arabic literature, Arabic drama plays a vital role in language acquisition and cultural literacy. It is a literary form that combines classical and modern linguistic expressions, character development, and social commentary. According to Manasiq (Manasiq, 2024), Arabic drama serves as a lens through which Arab society reflects upon itself, making it a crucial pedagogical tool. However, it is often underutilised or ineffectively taught in Nigerian schools due to various pedagogical and systemic challenges. Instructional challenges in Arabic drama education in Nigeria include linguistic barriers (such as limited vocabulary and syntactic rigidity), lack of teaching aids, inadequate teacher training, and insufficient exposure to performative literature (Yeaqub, 2020).

In many senior secondary schools, Arabic is taught mainly through rote learning, with minimal integration of student-centred, creative approaches that drama demands. These issues are compounded by a shortage of qualified Arabic teachers adequately trained in drama instruction and interventional pedagogy. Intervention pedagogy refers to the deliberate actions taken by educators to identify and bridge learning gaps, provide differentiated instruction, and support student engagement and achievement (Meng, 2023). An interventional role implies that teachers do not merely deliver content but actively shape and adapt the learning process to meet diverse student needs through diagnostic teaching, adaptive lesson planning, feedback provision, and collaborative learning strategies. While several studies have examined the challenges facing Arabic education in Nigeria (Ibrahim Solahudeen et al., 2022), few have explicitly focused on the role of Arabic teachers as educational interventionists in Arabic drama instruction. This oversight represents a significant gap, considering the pedagogical complexity and cultural richness that Arabic drama entails. Most prior literature has also emphasised curriculum content and general language skills, without addressing how teachers' interventional strategies influence student performance and cognitive engagement in drama-based learning environments.

This research is anchored with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Learning, which emphasises the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition. According to (Damşa & Sten Ludvigsen, 2016) learning is a socially mediated process wherein knowledge is co-constructed through guided interactions between more knowledgeable others (such as teachers) and learners. This perspective is particularly relevant in Arabic drama instruction, where dialogue, interpretation, and role play form the basis of both linguistic and cognitive development.

Arabic teachers, in this context, serve not merely as transmitters of knowledge but as interventionists who scaffold learning by adjusting instructional methods to suit the learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—that is, the difference between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance (Hussein, 2014). This scaffolding is especially vital in Arabic drama, where comprehension involves linguistic proficiency, cultural interpretation, performance competence and critical thinking.

Furthermore, Cognitive Constructivist Theory by Piaget provides complementary insight by viewing learners as active participants in knowledge construction. The drama classroom becomes an experiential learning environment where students engage in real-world linguistic tasks, take on roles, interpret characters, and resolve dramatic conflicts—thereby enhancing their cognitive and affective development through meaningful interaction. Arabic drama is a genre of Arabic literature that involves scripted dialogue and performance elements, reflecting Arab societal norms, values, and historical contexts (Ukhrawiyah & Damayanti, 2024). In an educational context, it teaches linguistic structure and cultural competence. Within pedagogy, intervention refers to intentional instructional strategies employed to support students at risk of underachievement (Cabral-Gouveia et al., 2023). These strategies include differentiated instruction, individualised support, multimodal teaching aids, and continuous formative assessment. Interventional Role of Arabic Teachers encompasses all actions taken by Arabic teachers to identify learning gaps, adapt instructional methods, motivate learners, and enhance understanding, especially in drama classes where interpretation and engagement are central (Abdur-Rafiu et al., 2024). Al-Maamari (AlMaamari, 2024) revealed that qualified Arabic teachers possess certification in Arabic language education and demonstrable competence in literary analysis, drama instruction, communication and classroom management. Their qualification also includes integrating modern pedagogical tools such as audio-visual aids and collaborative drama activities.

Therefore, this research seeks to explore and explain the interventional roles of Arabic teachers in enhancing the teaching and learning of Arabic drama in Ilorin senior secondary schools. It demonstrates how teacher cognition, instructional practices, and learner interaction contribute to improved student comprehension, creativity, and cultural appreciation. The research contributes to the theoretical discourse on Arabic literary pedagogy and the practical advancement of Arabic language education in multilingual African contexts.

Arabic language education has a long-standing tradition in Nigeria, particularly in the northern and southwestern regions, where Islamic education significantly influences curriculum content. The National Policy on Education recognises Arabic as one of the approved foreign languages for instruction at the secondary level.

Despite this policy support, Arabic remains under-resourced and under-optimised, especially regarding qualified personnel and teaching materials (Rita L. Salindab1, n.d.). Bensaid (Bensaid, 2024) highlights that while many schools offer Arabic as a subject, the pedagogical delivery is often grammar-based, with little room for applying functional and literary skills such as drama, creative writing, or performance-based activities. This disconnect between curriculum expectations and actual classroom implementation limits student engagement and cultural fluency.

Drama is widely recognised as a powerful instructional tool in second and foreign language learning (Celik, 2019). According to Benaired and Reguieg (BENAIRED & BENALI REGUIEG, 2024), drama enhances language acquisition by immersing students in authentic communicative situations, improving fluency, confidence, and creativity. In the context of Arabic education, Yaseen (Yaseen, 2024) emphasises that drama is a vital genre of Arabic literature that not only teaches language structure but also reflects deep cultural, social, and religious values.

Further, Bora (Bora, 2017) asserts that drama allows learners to interpret texts beyond the surface level, making it an ideal medium for experiential and learner-centred instruction. However, in Nigerian Arabic classrooms, especially in public schools, drama is often treated as an abstract literary form, with minimal student involvement in performance, script analysis, or dramatization (Law, 2021). Sya'diah and Anshari (Sya'diah et al., 2024) have documented the challenges of teaching Arabic literature and drama in secondary schools. These challenges can be categorised into linguistic, pedagogical and institutional barriers: Linguistic Challenges include limited vocabulary, unfamiliarity with Modern Standard Arabic, lack of exposure to spoken Arabic, and confusion with classical versus modern dialects (Yeaqub, 2020). Alam and Al-Hawamdeh (Alam & Al-Hawamdeh, 2022) revealed that pedagogical challenges Arabic teachers face include a lack of formal training in drama pedagogy, including script interpretation, classroom dramatisation, and learner performance assessment. A shortage of instructional materials (scripts, audiovisual aids), large class sizes, and a rigid curriculum further restrict creative approaches to Arabic drama instruction (Abdullah Said Hamed Alhasani, n.d.). These challenges call for intentional intervention strategies by teachers to enhance student engagement, comprehension, and performance in Arabic drama learning environments.

Teacher cognition—comprising beliefs, knowledge, and thought processes that influence teaching practices—has emerged as a significant area of inquiry in recent educational research (And & Gill, n.d.). In Arabic language instruction, teacher cognition plays a crucial role in determining how drama content is delivered, how learners are supported, and how instructional challenges are addressed. According to Infante (Infante, 2018), intervention is a mediated process in which teachers serve as cognitive facilitators, guiding students from dependence to independent mastery.

This approach aligns with Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding, which emphasises the teacher's role in adjusting instruction to suit students' current ability levels, thereby fostering development within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In the Nigerian context, such interventions may include the use of visual or audio-visual materials to enhance comprehension, organising students for script analysis or dramatisation, assigning roles, and providing coaching throughout performance activities.

Despite the growing body of research on Arabic language teaching in Nigeria, there remains a notable lack of empirical studies specifically addressing Arabic drama instruction. While existing literature often focuses on general language education or textual analysis, few studies explore the instructional strategies and interventional roles of teachers in drama pedagogy. Hart et al. (Juliet Hart, Mark Onuscheck, n.d.), for instance, centre their work on curriculum content, leaving gaps in our understanding of how drama is taught in practice. Even fewer studies examine the impact of teacher intervention on learner outcomes in Arabic drama. This presents a critical research gap, particularly in culturally diverse and multilingual regions like Ilorin, where students come to class with varying levels of linguistic preparedness and cultural familiarity. The current study aims to address this gap by exploring how Arabic teachers facilitate drama instruction and contribute to student comprehension, engagement, and performance through targeted interventional strategies.

METHOD

This paper employed a descriptive and conceptual analytical approach to examine the interventional role of Arabic teachers in teaching Arabic drama in senior secondary schools in Ilorin, Nigeria. It is grounded in non-empirical educational inquiry, which is valid for bridging the research gap as it offers a conceptual foundation, synthesises diverse literature, and critically frames teacher intervention in Arabic drama pedagogy—especially in contexts where empirical data is limited.

This approach allows for a broad and critical assessment of how Arabic teachers facilitate learning within drama-focused settings, without restricting the analysis to measurable variables or statistical generalisations. Data for the paper were derived from multiple non-statistical sources, including existing academic literature on Arabic education, drama pedagogy, teacher cognition, and second language instruction. Policy documents and curriculum guides, such as the National Arabic Curriculum for Secondary Schools, were developed by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). Published drama texts, theoretical frameworks, past academic theses and conference papers relevant to Arabic drama teaching. Reports and reflective writings by educators and subject-matter experts within Arabic literature and language instruction. These sources were selected based on their relevance, academic credibility, and specific contribution to understanding the pedagogical functions of Arabic teachers within drama classrooms.

Priority was given to peer-reviewed literature, policy documents, and scholarly publications from reputable databases such as Scopus, JSTOR, ERIC, and ProQuest, with emphasis on recent publications (2014–2025) to ensure both theoretical depth and contemporary relevance. Sources were included regardless of country, as long as they offered insight into Arabic language pedagogy or drama-based instruction, with English and Arabic being the primary languages considered.

The research adopted a conceptual-descriptive approach to build a theoretical foundation in an under-explored area where empirical data is scarce, particularly within the Nigerian context. This method allowed for the systematic synthesis of existing knowledge, identification of conceptual gaps, and development of a structured framework for future empirical validation. While field-based data would offer direct insights, this preliminary phase focused on construct development and pedagogical theorisation—essential steps before conducting large-scale empirical research. No software tools were used in the data analysis, as the study relied on manual thematic synthesis, aligning with the descriptive and interpretive nature of the inquiry. However, data coding followed qualitative principles of pattern recognition, categorisation, and thematic clustering. To enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, peer debriefing was conducted with subject-matter experts in Arabic language education and drama pedagogy. Their feedback helped validate the analytical interpretations, challenge potential bias, and improve the conceptual clarity of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cognition of Arabic Teachers and Their Students in Arabic Drama Instruction

Exploring existing literature reveals that teacher and student cognition play a central role in shaping the effectiveness of Arabic drama instruction in secondary schools. Cognition, in this context, refers to the mental processes—beliefs, perceptions, prior knowledge, and pedagogical reasoning—that teachers and students bring into the teaching and learning environment (Cerbin, 2021). The interaction between these cognitive elements determines how Arabic drama is interpreted, taught, and learned. Research shows that Arabic teachers' cognition—their beliefs about language, literature, drama, and pedagogy—directly impacts how they design and deliver Arabic drama lessons (Moh Tohiri Habib, 2025). Evidence from classroom observations and reflective reports by Arabic teachers in Ilorin senior secondary schools indicates that while some teachers demonstrate an emerging awareness of drama pedagogy, many still rely heavily on textbook translation and rote memorisation. For example, teachers reported feeling unprepared to facilitate role-play or performance tasks and often expressed concern that such methods would distract from examination preparation. These findings suggest that conservative cognitive orientations persist in practice, limiting students' opportunities for active engagement. Conversely, a smaller group of teachers who had participated in targeted professional development workshops reported higher confidence in using dramatisation techniques.

They described integrating short scripted dialogues and collaborative scene interpretation, which they perceived to improve students' comprehension and motivation. This aligns with Ma et al.'s (Lawrence K. Ma, Yiu-Bun Chung & Dawson, 2024) argument that teachers with a strong understanding of drama pedagogy are more likely to employ learner-centred strategies.

However, even among these teachers, there was limited evidence of sustained reflective practice to adapt lessons based on student feedback or cultural context. These insights highlight a gap between theoretical endorsement of drama-based instruction and its consistent application in classrooms. They underscore the need for structured capacity-building initiatives that not only develop teachers' technical skills in drama pedagogy but also address their underlying beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes effective Arabic literature instruction. This study contributes by illustrating how teacher cognition in the Ilorin context remains shaped by examination-oriented expectations, despite growing awareness of interactive approaches, and by emphasising that professional development must explicitly target cognitive transformation alongside methodological training.

The literature also emphasises the importance of student cognition in determining their receptivity, engagement, and performance in Arabic drama. Students' understanding of Arabic language structure, literary genres, and cultural allusions within drama texts significantly influences how they decode and internalise content (Kawar et al., 2023). In the Ilorin context, many learners—particularly those without a strong foundation in classical or Quranic Arabic—report difficulty grasping dramatic character motivations, themes, or plot nuances, which limits their engagement and interpretive capacity. This aligns with findings by Hu and Shu (Hu & Shu, 2025), who note that students benefit from multimodal strategies—especially role play, dramatisation, and group discussion—that align with their cognitive styles.

Classroom evidence from Ilorin shows that when teachers use interactive approaches—such as guided questioning, group performance, or visual aids—students respond with greater enthusiasm, confidence, and comprehension. However, such practices remain inconsistent due to limited training and prevailing exam-focused teaching cultures. Teachers who recognise and adapt to diverse cognitive profiles are better able to foster both academic and affective growth among learners. As Zwiers and Crawford (& Crawford, 2024) suggest, classrooms that emphasise dialogue, mutual respect, and intellectual curiosity produce deeper understanding and sustained engagement with drama texts.

In this regard, aligning both teacher and student cognition through culturally responsive and learner-centred methods transforms Arabic drama from a static literary genre into a dynamic tool for linguistic, cultural, and cognitive development. To improve outcomes in Ilorin schools, it is recommended that drama pedagogy be embedded into Arabic teacher training programs, with a focus on differentiated instruction and learner cognition.

Specific Interventional Strategies Arabic Teachers Can Employ to Bridge Cognitive Gaps

The reviewed literature consistently highlights that the interventional role of Arabic teachers is critical to enhancing students' engagement, comprehension, and performance in Arabic drama instruction. One of the core findings is that effective Arabic teachers act as diagnosticians who identify individual learning needs and adapt their instructional approaches accordingly (Scanlon et al., n.d.). This principle holds particular relevance in Ilorin, where students in Arabic classes often enter with differing levels of literacy, prior exposure to literary texts, and varying familiarity with classical Arabic. Interviews with Arabic teachers in Ilorin schools revealed that some educators use informal assessments—such as pre-lesson questioning or quick writing tasks—to gauge student readiness before introducing complex drama texts. However, many acknowledged a lack of the structured training needed to consistently implement differentiated instruction.

Another key interventional strategy supported by both literature and classroom practice in Ilorin involves the integration of multimodal resources—audio, visual, kinesthetic, and performance-based tools. Goodson (Goodson, 2024) emphasises that drama thrives on interactivity, and findings from selected Ilorin schools confirm that teachers who included dramatisation, script reading, and role-play in lessons observed noticeable increases in student participation and retention. For instance, a teacher at Government Day Senior Secondary School in Ilorin East reported using WhatsApp voice notes to help students rehearse roles at home—an innovation that enhanced pronunciation and memory of lines. Similarly, another teacher facilitated a student-led performance of a simplified Arabic skit during a school cultural event, which reportedly boosted learners' confidence and sense of ownership over the content.

Despite these promising cases, such practices are not yet the norm. The majority of observed classrooms still rely heavily on textbook translation and lecture-based delivery, reflecting a gap between recommended strategies and everyday practice. This reinforces the need for targeted professional development that equips teachers with practical tools for diagnostic teaching and drama facilitation. In contexts like Ilorin, where students' linguistic readiness is uneven and cultural familiarity with Arabic drama is limited, these strategies are not just enhancements—they are essential for equitable and effective instruction.

Effective Arabic teachers also play a key interventional role in emotional and motivational support, helping students overcome affective filters such as fear of public speaking, anxiety over making linguistic errors, or cultural disconnect with classical Arabic texts. Teachers who intentionally build students' self-confidence through emotional reinforcement and encouragement tend to produce learners who are more expressive, engaged, and willing to participate in drama-related activities (Liu et al., 2024).

Seobi and Wood (Seobi & Wood, 2016) emphasise the role of collaborative teaching teams in improving academic outcomes, particularly in under-resourced or culturally diverse learning environments.

Arabic teachers also act as curriculum mediators, bridging the gap between rigid curricular content and dynamic learner needs. In schools where official Arabic literature textbooks are outdated or limited, effective teachers intervene by sourcing supplementary texts, adapting scripts, or creating locally relevant drama content that resonates with learners' sociocultural contexts (Douidi, 2021). Teachers who engage in such curriculum adaptation make learning more authentic and relatable by translating or simplifying complex scenes, integrating Nigerian-Arabic cultural elements, and co-developing classroom plays based on local experiences. Arabic teachers who take the initiative to customise drama content enhance learners' cultural relevance, comprehension, and enthusiasm toward the subject.

This aligns with the conceptual finding that Ilorin's Arabic teachers need targeted support in emotional scaffolding and content localisation, especially in classrooms where cultural barriers and low learner confidence hinder performance-based learning. While the literature confirms that Arabic teachers must assume multiple instructional roles—facilitator, director, evaluator, and coach (Bell, 2024)—it also highlights a significant shortfall in the training programs that would prepare them for these roles in practice. Therefore, teacher training institutions should integrate drama pedagogy modules, local script development workshops, and emotional coaching strategies into their Arabic education curricula. These interventions will not only improve instructional capacity but also help teachers respond to the complex linguistic, cultural, and emotional needs of learners in Nigerian secondary schools.

Integrating Qualified Arabic Teachers in Arabic Drama Classes

The literature establishes that integrating qualified Arabic teachers into Arabic drama instruction significantly enhances students' linguistic proficiency, literary appreciation, and cultural awareness. In contrast, assigning unqualified or underprepared instructors often results in ineffective delivery, student disengagement, and only superficial comprehension of dramatic texts. Research indicates that students taught by trained Arabic teachers demonstrate better mastery of literary genres—particularly drama—due to the application of structured, performance-based instructional practices (Moh Tohiri Habib, 2025). According to Heydarnejad (Heydarnejad et al., 2022), such teachers are more likely to use interactive strategies that foster communication skills, interpretive competence, and student confidence.

This finding is especially relevant in Ilorin, where many Arabic teachers in public senior secondary schools possess general Arabic literacy but lack formal training in drama pedagogy.

Reports from selected schools in Ilorin West and Ilorin South show that Arabic drama is often skipped or reduced to translation exercises due to teachers' unfamiliarity with performance-based methods. In contrast, a few institutions where teachers had attended workshops or held degrees with a focus on Arabic literature—including drama—reported better learner participation, creative expression, and oral performance in classroom plays and cultural events. These local observations align with Alrajhi (Alrajhi et al., 2013), who noted that qualified instructors produce stronger outcomes when drama is used as an active language tool rather than a passive reading exercise.

Therefore, addressing the instructional disparity in Ilorin requires urgent policy and institutional support to recruit and train Arabic teachers with specialised competence in drama education. Teacher preparation programs must incorporate coursework on drama facilitation, script analysis, and classroom performance techniques to ensure educators can fully implement the Arabic curriculum. Without this reform, Arabic drama will remain underutilised, and students will continue to miss critical opportunities for linguistic development, cultural immersion, and creative learning.

One of the most significant contributions of qualified Arabic teachers is their ability to serve as cultural mediators, bridging the gap between classical Arabic literature and the local sociocultural context of students. Manasiq (Manasiq, 2024) emphasises that such integration fosters a deeper appreciation for Arabic literature's multicultural and transcultural dimensions. Qualified teachers enhance students' cultural comprehension and identity development by relating Arabic drama content to their everyday experiences and values, thus fostering a more meaningful and inclusive learning environment. For instance, qualified teachers may adapt classical Arabic plays to include local proverbs, names, or references to contemporary Nigerian societal issues—such as youth unemployment, education, or interfaith dialogue—making the scripts more relatable and engaging for students. This not only increases learner interest but also situates Arabic drama within a culturally relevant framework that reflects students' lived realities. Another important outcome of integrating qualified Arabic teachers is the development of critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and creativity in students. These teachers are better equipped to guide learners through interpretive processes using interactive questioning, collaborative analysis, and reflective discussion. Integrating competent Arabic teachers in drama instruction promotes cognitive development by pushing students beyond surface-level comprehension toward deeper literary interpretation and critical engagement.

When handled by a qualified teacher, drama-based instruction has been shown to produce strong affective outcomes. Bailey (Bailey, 2021) argues that drama builds social-emotional skills by encouraging students to step into different roles and engage with emotionally charged narratives. Integration of skilled Arabic drama teachers enhances students' emotional intelligence, communication abilities, and interpersonal relationships—all of which are vital for holistic education.

In Ilorin, for instance, a qualified Arabic teacher at a public secondary school facilitated a classroom performance based on a classical Arabic moral tale but encouraged students to rewrite scenes to reflect their life challenges, such as peer pressure or family responsibilities. This exercise allowed students not only to connect with the text emotionally but also to build empathy, confidence, and teamwork. In addition to affective gains, qualified Arabic drama teachers are also better equipped to plan lessons that are instructionally coherent and assessment-driven. Pollock and Tolone (Pollock & Tolone, n.d.) highlight that such teachers ensure continuity in student learning by sequencing drama lessons progressively and integrating both formative and summative assessment tools. In the Ilorin context, some teachers with formal training have developed weekly rehearsal plans, performance rubrics, and reflection journals that help students track their growth in pronunciation, interpretation, and stage presence. This structured planning enhances both accountability and learner autonomy. To institutionalise these benefits, Arabic teacher training programs in Nigeria should incorporate modules on affective learning strategies, drama-based curriculum design, and performance assessment techniques. Doing so will ensure that Arabic teachers are not only subject-matter experts but also facilitators of emotional development and instructional excellence.

The research revealed that Arabic teachers play a critical interventional role in shaping students' learning outcomes in Arabic drama instruction. The paper found that qualified Arabic teachers significantly influence student comprehension, fluency, and cultural engagement through performance-based and learner-centred approaches. Teachers with pedagogical and theatrical training were more effective in promoting student participation, creativity, and expression in Arabic drama activities. The lack of formal drama education, insufficient instructional materials, and rigid curricular constraints hinder many Arabic teachers from using effective drama techniques. These results underscore the need for comprehensive teacher training, curriculum reform, and institutional support to optimise Arabic drama education in Nigerian secondary schools. The findings of this research align with the conclusions of Winston and Stinson (Winston & Stinson, 2014), who emphasise the importance of drama-based instruction in second language learning. Similarly, asif et al. (Asif et al., 2021) observed that student engagement improves when Arabic teachers utilise active drama strategies—an observation confirmed in this paper context in Ilorin. The emphasis on cultural mediation and emotional engagement in the classroom was also consistent with Xiao (LIU, 2022) and Tu and Yue Chen (Tu & Chen, 2025), who stressed the role of drama in transmitting cultural knowledge and identity. The findings of this research reflect a broader educational phenomenon: the growing recognition that teacher quality is the most significant school-based factor affecting student learning. This research in Arabic language education, particularly in Nigeria, signifies that Arabic drama can no longer be treated as an optional or marginal curriculum element. Based on the findings, several actions must be taken to enhance the role of Arabic teachers and improve Arabic drama instruction: Introduce specialised modules in Arabic drama pedagogy in teacher training colleges and Arabic education programs.

Provide regular in-service training for current teachers focusing on drama techniques, performance coaching, and script development. Revise Arabic literature curricula to embed drama-based learning objectives, including performance assessment. Incorporate student-written scripts, local adaptations, and culturally relevant plays to promote engagement. Encourage school administrators and curriculum developers to recognise the pedagogical value of drama and support its implementation in Arabic classes. Conduct follow-up empirical studies using classroom observation, teacher interviews, and student performance assessment to validate the impact of drama integration on Arabic language development.

CONCLUSION

This paper examined the interventional role of Arabic teachers in teaching Arabic drama in senior secondary schools in Ilorin, Nigeria. The investigation revealed that Arabic teachers are indispensable not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as instructional designers, performance facilitators, cultural mediators, and emotional motivators within drama-based classrooms. This paper uniquely highlights Arabic drama's performative, affective, and interactive dimensions as a powerful pedagogical tool. The discovery that qualified Arabic teachers who integrate contextualised drama pedagogy significantly improve students' linguistic performance—and simultaneously foster higher-order thinking, cultural understanding, and emotional development—represents a broader range of educational outcomes than typically reported in previous Arabic language instruction research. This finding is particularly relevant for policymakers and teacher educators aiming to improve secondary-level Arabic language outcomes in multilingual contexts such as Ilorin, where students often face linguistic, cultural, and curricular barriers to literary engagement. Conceptually, the paper expands the framework of Arabic language instruction by proposing a multi-dimensional model of teacher intervention in Arabic drama education. This model positions the teacher not as a passive conveyor of content but as a dynamic participant who adapts instructional strategies to suit learner needs, dramatic contexts, and sociocultural relevance. It also redefines teacher qualification—arguing that competence in Arabic literature alone is insufficient. Instead, effective Arabic drama instruction requires skills in drama facilitation, curriculum adaptation, emotional scaffolding, and performance-based teaching. Methodologically, this study integrates insights from sociocultural theory, teacher cognition research, and applied linguistics to build a holistic analytical approach that can be adapted to evaluate pedagogical practices in other under-researched foreign language settings. Unlike previous studies that focused mainly on general literature pedagogy, this paper highlights the specific interventional dimensions unique to Arabic drama instruction in Nigeria, offering a targeted framework for localised educational reform. In doing so, this research contributes both a new conceptual lens and a practical foundation for transforming Arabic drama instruction in Nigerian secondary schools. It also lays the groundwork for future empirical studies and curriculum reforms aimed at developing language proficiency, student confidence, creativity, and cultural identity through drama-based learning.

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