

Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence through Arabic Film-Based Translation Learning in Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

Nuqayah Islamic Boarding School (*Pesantren*) in Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, Madura, utilizes Arabic films to support Arabic language learning. However, students often encounter difficulties in translating cultural expressions in film dialogues, including idioms, dialects, contextual meanings, and sociocultural nuances. This study aims to explore Arabic film-based translation (*tarjamah*) learning, focusing on teachers' instructional strategies, students' challenges, and pedagogical efforts to address these difficulties. A qualitative case study design was employed. Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving 30 students and 5 Arabic language teachers. Data were analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that teachers employed repeated viewing, textual support, cultural discussions, and communicative oral translation practices. Students' challenges extended beyond linguistic issues to include difficulties in interpreting cultural symbols, nonverbal communication, and social contexts represented in Arabic films. The pesantren environment further supported language retention and cultural internalization through the daily use of Arabic. This study concludes that Arabic film-based translation pedagogy contributes to the development of students' intercultural communicative competence by integrating language learning, cultural interpretation, and contextual communication.

Keywords: Arabic films, cultural translation, intercultural communicative competence, audiovisual pedagogy, Islamic boarding school

INTRODUCTION

The integration of digital technology into education has brought significant changes to Arabic language teaching practices in recent years. The rapid development of digital technology and audiovisual media has encouraged educators to move beyond text-centered instruction toward more contextual and interactive learning approaches. One notable development is the growing number of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), which were traditionally associated with conventional teaching media, that have begun to adopt digital technologies to enhance the effectiveness of Arabic language learning. This shift indicates that Islamic educational institutions no longer rely solely on traditional teaching methods but are increasingly utilizing various digital media to support the learning process (Hockly & Dudeney, 2018).

In addition, contemporary learners are increasingly immersed in multimodal digital environments shaped by films, social media, mobile technologies, and various interactive platforms, creating a demand for more adaptive and contextual pedagogical practices (Talib, 2018). Recent studies have also highlighted that multimodal pedagogy integrating visual, auditory, and interactive media can enhance learners' cognitive engagement and learning experiences in contemporary educational settings (Y. Shi, 2025). Consequently, these transformations have influenced the orientation of foreign language instruction, including Arabic language learning in Islamic educational institutions. Within the context of Arabic language learning, translation is one of the essential skills that learners need to develop. Translation involves not only transferring meaning from one language to another but also understanding the cultural elements embedded within language use. Therefore, translation activities require learners to engage with both language and culture simultaneously.

In learning activities that utilize Arabic films, this complexity becomes even greater. Students are required not only to produce accurate translations but also to understand spoken dialogues and capture both explicit and implicit meanings conveyed through audiovisual communication. Thus, translation through Arabic films can be viewed as a complex listening activity that involves understanding, interpreting, and reproducing meaning in the target language. This complexity suggests that translating Arabic film dialogues cannot be understood merely as a process of transferring language from one linguistic system to another. Rather, it also requires the ability to interpret meanings shaped by communicative contexts and cultural backgrounds. In line with this perspective, contemporary translation pedagogy views translation not simply as language transfer but as a process of interpreting contextual and cultural meanings. Through translation activities, learners develop vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, interpretative abilities, and confidence in language use (Liu & Yang, 2025).

In Arabic learning contexts, translation serves as a bridge connecting linguistic competence with sociocultural understanding because meaning is frequently shaped by contextual and communicative factors (Hamid, 2025). This issue becomes increasingly important because Arabic learning materials frequently contain sociocultural meanings embedded within communicative practices and cultural representation (Fahmi, 2026). Consequently, learners are often required to move beyond literal translation in order to understand intended meanings accurately.

At the same time, films have increasingly been recognized as valuable instructional resources in language education. Films provide authentic language exposure through spoken interaction, visual context, body language, and sociocultural representation, enabling learners to encounter language as it is used in real communicative situations (King, 2002; Maraj, 2025). As multimodal learning resources, films support learners' comprehension and interpretation by connecting verbal and non-verbal information simultaneously, making them particularly relevant for contextual language learning and cultural interpretation.

One of the Islamic boarding schools actively developing contextual Arabic learning practices is the Nuqayah Islamic Boarding School in Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, Madura. The institution is widely recognized for its emphasis on Arabic language proficiency and implements a supplementary weekly Arabic learning program using Arabic short films as instructional media. Through teacher-guided activities, students are required to understand dialogues, identify linguistic expressions, interpret contextual meanings, and analyze elements of *fasāhah*, dialectal variation, and intended meanings embedded in authentic Arabic communication. This learning process positions Arabic films not merely as listening materials but also as resources for linguistic and cultural interpretation.

However, preliminary observations revealed that many students continue to experience difficulties when translating cultural expressions appearing in Arabic film dialogues. These difficulties are associated not only with vocabulary limitations but also with challenges in interpreting idiomatic expressions, dialectal forms, sociocultural references, and contextual meanings that cannot be understood through literal translation alone. As a result, students often struggle to transfer intended meanings accurately into the target language despite recognizing the lexical content of the dialogue. This phenomenon suggests that translation learning through Arabic films involves a complex process of cultural interpretation in which linguistic competence must be accompanied by contextual and intercultural understanding.

A growing body of research has examined the use of Arabic films and audiovisual materials as language learning media. Findings indicate that Arabic films provide authentic linguistic exposure and support the development of communicative competence (Derajat et al., 2025), while film-based translation activities help learners identify denotative meanings, idiomatic expressions, and contextual language use (Febriani et al., 2025). These findings are consistent with studies suggesting that communicative expressions in Arabic often require pragmatic and cultural interpretation because literal translation alone is insufficient to convey intended meanings accurately (Abdullah & Abdul, 2025; Luthfi et al., 2025). In addition, research on audiovisual translation highlights the importance of cultural mediation and contextual adaptation in interpreting Arabic film dialogues (Jimenez-Andres et al., 2025).

Despite these contributions, evidence regarding the implementation of Arabic films in translation learning within Islamic boarding schools remains limited. Existing studies have primarily focused on audiovisual learning, digital media, or translation pedagogy in formal educational settings. Consequently, little attention has been paid to how Arabic films are pedagogically integrated into translation learning in pesantren contexts, particularly concerning students' difficulties in interpreting cultural expressions, communicative nuances, and contextual meanings embedded in authentic Arabic film dialogues. This gap is significant because Islamic boarding schools possess distinctive educational traditions, intensive Arabic learning cultures, and unique social environments that differ considerably from schools and universities.

Accordingly, this study addresses three research questions. First, what challenges do students encounter when translating cultural expressions embedded in Arabic film dialogues? Second, what strategies do teachers employ to address students' learning challenges during translation activities? Third, what pedagogical strategies are used to teach the translation of cultural expressions through Arabic films? By addressing these questions, the study contributes to the growing literature on Arabic translation pedagogy by providing empirical evidence from an Islamic boarding school context, a setting that remains underrepresented in previous studies. The findings also extend discussions on intercultural communicative competence by illustrating how Arabic films facilitate the integration of language learning, cultural interpretation, and contextual communication practices. Based on these considerations, this study aims to explore translation learning through Arabic films at the Nuqayah Islamic Boarding School in Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, Madura. Specifically, the study investigates the

instructional process, teachers' pedagogical strategies, and students' challenges in interpreting and translating cultural expressions embedded in Arabic film dialogues.

Literature Review

Arabic Films in Language Learning

Films have become an important resource in contemporary language learning because they provide authentic linguistic input within meaningful communicative contexts (King, 2002). Through audiovisual exposure, learners encounter pronunciation, intonation, gestures, facial expressions, and sociocultural interactions simultaneously, enabling them to understand language as it is used in real communication. Unlike decontextualized instructional materials, films present language in naturally occurring communicative situations, allowing learners to observe how speakers negotiate meaning across different social and cultural settings.

From a multimodal learning perspective, meaning is constructed through the integration of verbal and non-verbal information, allowing learners to process language more effectively and contextually (Maraj, 2025). Visual cues, body language, situational contexts, and auditory elements complement linguistic forms and assist learners in interpreting communicative intentions. As a result, films offer a rich learning environment in which language comprehension extends beyond lexical recognition toward contextual meaning-making.

Consequently, films are increasingly recognized as valuable pedagogical tools for supporting authentic language exposure and learner engagement in foreign language classrooms (Hockly & Dudeney, 2018). Their ability to combine linguistic, visual, and cultural information provides opportunities for learners to engage with authentic communicative practices while simultaneously developing linguistic and sociocultural awareness. This pedagogical potential has contributed to the growing integration of films into various language learning contexts, including translation-oriented instruction.

Translation Learning in Arabic Education

Translation learning occupies an important position in Arabic language education, particularly in Islamic educational settings where Arabic texts constitute a major source of learning. Contemporary translation pedagogy views translation not merely as a process of linguistic transfer but also as an activity involving the interpretation of contextual and cultural meanings. Within this perspective, successful translation requires learners to move beyond word-for-word equivalence and consider communicative intentions, sociocultural references, and contextual factors that shape meaning (Hamid, 2025).

In Arabic learning contexts, translation serves as a bridge connecting linguistic competence with sociocultural understanding because meaning is frequently influenced by contextual and communicative factors (Hamid, 2025). Consequently, translation activities contribute not only to meaning-making processes but also to the development of learners' vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, interpretative abilities, and confidence in language use (Liu & Yang, 2025). Through translation practices, learners are encouraged to engage critically with language and culture, making translation an important pedagogical tool for developing both linguistic and intercultural competencies.

The theoretical perspectives discussed above suggest that translation learning through Arabic films requires learners to possess adequate cognitive readiness and sustained concentration in order to comprehend both explicit and implicit meanings embedded in audiovisual communication. In film-based translation activities, learners are required to process linguistic, visual, contextual, and cultural information simultaneously, making translation a complex interpretative process rather than a mere transfer of words from one language to another. Therefore, vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in supporting learners' ability to understand and translate Arabic film dialogues accurately. At the same time,

familiarity with Arab culture becomes equally important because many communicative expressions, cultural references, and contextual meanings cannot be fully understood through literal translation alone.

Cultural Expressions and Contextual Interpretation

Cultural expressions represent an essential component of Arabic communication because language often reflects social values, cultural norms, and collective identities. In many communicative situations, meaning is not conveyed solely through linguistic forms but is also shaped by cultural assumptions and shared social experiences. Consequently, understanding Arabic communication requires learners to recognize the cultural dimensions embedded within language use and communicative practices.

The translation of cultural expressions presents particular challenges because intended meanings are frequently conveyed implicitly rather than explicitly. According to Luthfi et al., (2025), idioms and communicative expressions often require pragmatic and contextual interpretation since literal translation alone is insufficient to convey intended meanings accurately. Similarly, studies on Arabic audiovisual translation demonstrate that cultural and historical references frequently require mediation and adaptation to preserve meaning across languages (Abdullah & Abdul, 2025; Jimenez-Andres et al., 2025).

This issue becomes increasingly important in Arabic language learning because instructional materials frequently contain sociocultural meanings embedded within communicative practices and cultural representations (Fahmi, 2026). As a result, learners are expected not only to understand linguistic structures but also to interpret the cultural contexts that shape meaning. Therefore, successful interpretation of cultural expressions requires the integration of linguistic competence, intercultural understanding, and contextual awareness.

The theoretical perspectives discussed above suggest that translating cultural expressions in Arabic films is a complex process that may present challenges for learners, as successful interpretation depends not only on linguistic competence but also on cultural understanding and the ability to accurately comprehend communicative contexts.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore translation learning (*tarjamah*) through Arabic films at Nuqayah Islamic Boarding School in Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, Madura. The design was selected because the study sought to understand how Arabic film-based translation learning was implemented within the specific context of a *pesantren*, including the learning practices that emerged in the classroom, teachers' instructional strategies, students' interpretative experiences, and the sociocultural dynamics surrounding the learning process (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Yin, 2017). The participants consisted of 30 students (*santri*) and 5 Arabic language teachers who were actively involved in the supplementary *tarjamah* learning program. The data were categorized into primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from classroom learning activities, teacher-student interactions, and students' translation practices related to cultural expressions appearing in Arabic film dialogues, while secondary data included learning documents, students' assignments, instructional materials, and Arabic films used during the learning process.

The research was conducted in three stages. First, the researcher carried out preliminary observations to identify the implementation of Arabic film-based *tarjamah* learning and to determine the participants involved in the study. Second, data collection was conducted through non-participant classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations focused on instructional processes, teacher strategies, classroom interaction, and students' responses during film-based *tarjamah* learning activities. Interviews were conducted with teachers and selected students to explore interpretative processes,

translation difficulties, and contextual understanding of Arabic cultural expressions. Documentation was used to support observational and interview data through learning records, students' translation assignments, and audiovisual materials. Third, the collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of (Lestari, 2024; Miles et al., 2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation (Alexander, 2019)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' Strategies in Teaching the Translation of Cultural Expressions

The findings revealed that teachers at Ma'had Annuqayah implemented the teaching of cultural expression translation through several systematic stages. The instructional process began with repeated viewing of Arabic films, which were screened three times during classroom sessions. At this stage, students were required to take notes on vocabulary items, expressions, and dialogue segments they considered difficult during the listening process. This activity aimed to strengthen students' listening skills and increase their linguistic awareness of Arabic language use in authentic communicative contexts.

Following the viewing stage, teachers provided written transcripts related to the film content. Students were then asked to compare their notes with the available text. Teachers also facilitated group discussions focusing on language fluency (*fasāhah*), dialectal variations, idiomatic expressions, and cultural meanings embedded in the film dialogues. In the final stage, students engaged in oral translation activities and were encouraged to express and interpret the cultural meanings contained in the film conversations through communicative practice. In addition, the findings showed that teachers employed consecutive oral translation as one of the main translation-training techniques for students.

Table 1. Stages of Cultural Expression Translation Learning through Arabic Films

Learning Stage	Classroom Implementation	Learning Objective
Repeated Viewing	The film is screened three times	To improve listening skills and linguistic awareness
Note-Taking	Students record vocabulary items and expressions	To identify linguistic features and cultural expressions
Textual Support	The teacher provides film dialogue transcripts	To facilitate comprehension of meaning and language structures
Cultural Discussion	Analysis of dialects, idioms, and cultural contexts	To understand cultural aspects embedded in communication
Translation Practice	Communicative oral translation activities	To develop interpretative and communicative abilities

According to the data presented in Table 1, the teaching of cultural expression translation through Arabic films was carried out through a series of interconnected learning activities. The process began with repeated viewing of the films, followed by note-taking, the use of written transcripts, cultural discussions, and oral translation practice. Classroom observations showed that each activity had a particular role in supporting students' understanding of Arabic film

dialogues. After watching the films, students were encouraged to compare their notes with the written transcripts provided by the teachers, discuss unfamiliar expressions, and explore cultural meanings embedded in the conversations. Repeated exposure to the same dialogues also allowed students to pay closer attention to language use, cultural references, and communicative intentions that were not always immediately apparent during the initial viewing.

The learning process observed in this study suggests that Arabic films were used for more than developing students' listening and translation skills. Through guided discussions and oral translation activities, students were encouraged to interpret cultural meanings and contextual expressions that appeared in authentic communication. In this sense, Arabic films functioned not only as audiovisual learning materials but also as a medium through which language and culture could be learned simultaneously. The findings further indicate that understanding Arabic film dialogues required students to move beyond vocabulary recognition and engage with the cultural contexts that shaped the intended meanings of the conversations.

These findings are consistent with the study of Alamri, (2025), who reported that authentic audiovisual materials can enhance learners' motivation and understanding of real-life communication. At the same time, such materials may create challenges related to cultural differences, limited background knowledge, and the cognitive demands involved in comprehending authentic language use. A similar pattern emerged in the present study. Many students experienced difficulties in understanding dialogues, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references appearing in Arabic films. As a result, teachers played an important role in providing written transcripts, explanations, and interpretative guidance to support students throughout the translation process.

Tognozzi, (2010) also argued that language and culture learning through films can be facilitated through film dialogues, conversation transcripts, visual observation, and communicative practice. The findings of the present study support this view, particularly regarding the use of audiovisual materials as a means of developing cultural understanding and communicative competence. However, an interesting feature of the learning process observed in the pesantren was the integration of consecutive oral translation practice. Students were not only encouraged to understand linguistic forms and cultural meanings but were also trained to communicate their interpretations orally. This suggests that film-based translation learning in the pesantren served not only as a medium for language and cultural learning but also as a practical exercise in interpreting and conveying cultural meanings across languages.

Students' Challenges in Translating Cultural Expressions

Based on the field data, the findings revealed that students encountered several challenges in translating cultural expressions through Arabic films. These challenges can be categorized into pedagogical and technical, linguistic, and cultural dimensions. Pedagogical and technical challenges were related to the speed of film dialogues, limited learning space, and insufficient instructional facilities to support the listening process. Meanwhile, linguistic challenges included difficulties in understanding vocabulary, sentence structures, and idiomatic expressions in Arabic.

From a cultural perspective, students experienced difficulties in understanding local dialects, Arab social customs, and the meanings conveyed through nonverbal cues presented in the films. These findings indicate that translating cultural expressions involves not only linguistic competence but also a comprehensive understanding of the social and cultural contexts of native speakers.

Table 2. Students' Challenges in Translating Cultural Expressions

Challenge Category	Forms of Challenges	Impact on Learning
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Pedagogical and Technical	Fast-paced dialogues and limited learning facilities	Students experience difficulty following film content
Linguistic	Limited vocabulary and insufficient understanding of sentence structures	Misinterpretation of meanings and sentence organization
Cultural	Difficulty understanding dialects and social contexts	Misinterpretation of cultural expressions

The data presented in Table 2 show that students' difficulties in translating cultural expressions extend beyond language proficiency and involve both cultural understanding and the technical demands of audiovisual learning. Students frequently struggled with the speed of film dialogues, unfamiliar vocabulary, dialectal variation, and references to Arab social life, indicating that the interpretation of cultural expressions requires more than linguistic knowledge alone. Under these conditions, students frequently encounter challenges in comprehending intended meanings, constructing appropriate sentence structures, and accurately interpreting cultural expressions embedded in Arabic film dialogues.

A similar pattern was reported by Albuhayri & Elyas, (2026), who argued that Arabic films represent the social and cultural dynamics of Arab societies through who argued that Arabic films reflect the social and cultural dynamics of Arab societies through language, identity, social norms, and changing cultural values. Films convey not only linguistic messages but also cultural symbols, social relationships, and visual meanings that require contextual interpretation by viewers. The experiences of students in this study point to the same issue. Difficulties in understanding dialects, social customs, and nonverbal cues suggest that successful translation depends not only on linguistic competence but also on intercultural understanding.

Mirza et al., (2025), reported that audiovisual translation commonly involves strategies such as substitution, generalization, literal translation, and specification. Despite the use of these strategies, translators continue to face challenges related to semantic accuracy, stylistic appropriateness, and grammatical structures. The authors further noted that limited cultural knowledge, difficulties in interpreting idiomatic expressions, and the technical characteristics of audiovisual materials often become major obstacles in the translation process.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study reveal a slightly different context. The challenges encountered in cultural translation are influenced not only by linguistic and audiovisual barriers, as identified by Mirza et al., (2025), but also by the complexity of cultural and social representations embedded in Arabic films, as highlighted by Albuhayri & Elyas, (2026), Within the pesantren setting, students are required not only to understand linguistic features and idiomatic expressions but also to interpret cultural values, social identities, and meanings embedded in Arabic film dialogues during the translation process.

Teachers' Strategies for Addressing Learning Challenges

The results showed that teachers employed several strategies to assist students who experienced difficulties in translating cultural expressions. These strategies included repeated film viewing, textual explanations, vocabulary reinforcement, and the provision of written materials related to the film content. Through these activities, teachers helped students better understand the linguistic forms, cultural meanings, and contextual expressions embedded in Arabic film dialogues.

Teachers also encouraged students to repeatedly use newly acquired vocabulary and expressions from the films in their daily communication within the pesantren environment. As a result, learning was not limited to classroom activities but continued through students' everyday interactions. This practice allowed students to use Arabic in meaningful contexts while gradually strengthening their understanding of the cultural meanings associated with the expressions they learned.

Table 3. Teachers' Strategies for Addressing Learning Challenges

Instructional Strategy	Implementation	Learning Function
Repeated film viewing	Replaying selected dialogue segments	Enhances students' comprehension
Textual explanation	Explaining meanings and cultural contexts	Supports interpretation of cultural expressions
Vocabulary reinforcement	Introducing new vocabulary and idioms	Expands students' language repertoire
Written materials	Providing film-related transcripts and texts	Facilitates analysis and translation
Communicative practice	Using expressions in daily interactions	Strengthens language and cultural retention

The findings in Table 3 show that teachers used repeated film viewing, vocabulary reinforcement, and communicative practice as key methods to help students understand cultural expressions in Arabic films. Watching film dialogues multiple times allowed students to process language more effectively and improved their understanding of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references found in the conversations. In addition, the use of newly learned expressions in everyday communication within the pesantren environment helped students retain vocabulary and apply cultural expressions in more meaningful contexts.

These results are in line with the study by Shi et al., (2025), which found that repeated video-based activities can enhance vocabulary acquisition and increase learners' awareness of target lexical items through recurring audiovisual exposure. Similarly, Hofslundsengen et al., (2026) reported that the regular use of language in daily activities and social interactions contributes significantly to language development and retention. A similar pattern was evident in this study. Students benefited not only from repeated exposure to Arabic film dialogues but also from opportunities to use newly learned vocabulary and cultural expressions in their daily interactions. This combination helped them retain language more effectively while developing a deeper understanding of the cultural meanings conveyed through the films.

Arabic Films, Cultural Translation, and Intercultural Learning

Three closely related themes emerged from this study: (1) Arabic films as a medium of cultural translation, (2) the complexity of translating cultural expressions in Arabic films, and (3) the role of the pesantren environment in supporting language and cultural internalization. Together, these themes show that translation learning through Arabic films involves more than transferring meanings from one language to another. Students are also required to interpret cultural meanings, understand communicative contexts, and engage with intercultural forms of

communication. The discussion that follows considers these themes through the lenses of audiovisual pedagogy, cultural translation, and intercultural communicative competence.

1. *Arabic Films as a Medium of Cultural Translation*

The results demonstrate that Arabic films, used as a listening medium in learning activities at Ma'had Annuqayah, function as a vehicle for cultural translation. The films contain dialogues, idiomatic expressions, different registers or dialects, as well as social situations reflected in the conversations. Supported by repeated viewing, note-taking, textual assistance, and oral translation practice, students are guided to understand the relationship between linguistic forms and cultural meanings in Arabic expressions. As a result, students' learning outcomes go beyond listening to sounds and words and extend to interpreting cultural meanings through audiovisual media.

The findings also suggest that Arabic films can be considered authentic materials that present language use in natural communicative contexts. Learning through such materials enables students to understand Arabic in relation to its context, where language is closely connected with social, cultural, and visual dimensions of communication. In addition, repeated viewing helps students become more aware of difficult words, phrases, and registers that are often missed in initial listening. In this context, audiovisual learning develops into a multimodal activity that integrates listening skills, cultural interpretation, and communicative language use.

All these findings are consistent with Alamri, (2025), who argues that authentic audiovisual materials can increase learners' motivation and understanding of real-life communication because language is learned within social contexts. However, he also notes that such materials may create a high cognitive load due to cultural differences and learners' limited background knowledge.

Similarly, D. Shi et al., (2025) found that repeated viewing in video-based learning helps students focus more on target vocabulary and supports second language acquisition through continuous exposure to audiovisual input. In line with this, Tognozzi, (2010) explains that audiovisual learning through films can enhance learners' engagement, cultural awareness, and interpretative competence by combining dialogue, transcription, and visual cultural cues.

In addition, the findings of this study show that learning through Arabic films contributes to students' intercultural communicative competence. Students are not only exposed to linguistic elements but also learn to interpret social meanings, cultural identities, and patterns of interaction within Arab societies. This is in line with Hussain et al., (2025), who emphasize that Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) is an essential component of foreign language learning, particularly when supported by experiential learning and cultural media that enable broader understanding of cross-cultural communication. In this study, oral translation activities and cultural discussions indicate that students learn Arabic not merely as a linguistic system, but also as a cultural representation reflecting values, norms, and ways of thinking of its speakers.

2. *The Complexity of Translating Cultural Expressions in Arabic Films*

Students' difficulties in translating cultural utterances suggest that the challenges of cultural translation extend beyond lexical and grammatical knowledge. In many cases, students encounter similar problems when dealing with idioms, regional language variations, cultural symbols, and nonverbal communication embedded in Arabic film dialogues. They often struggle to interpret implied meanings, social contexts, and visual cues that do not have direct equivalents in the target language. These findings suggest that cultural translation is a meaning-making process in which Arabic films present language as being embedded within social, symbolic, and visual networks of communication.

The findings further suggest that translating cultural expressions requires intercultural competence in addition to linguistic ability. In audiovisual contexts, meaning is constructed

not only through verbal utterances but also through facial expressions, intonation, body language, and the cultural situations underlying conversations. This finding is consistent with Albuhayri & Elyas, (2026), who argued that Arabic films represent social identities, cultural norms, and societal dynamics through language and visual symbols that require contextual interpretation from viewers. In the present study, students' difficulties in understanding local dialects and nonverbal communication demonstrate that cultural translation demands the ability to interpret social and cultural symbols beyond the linguistic level.

Furthermore, the findings are in line with Mirza et al., (2025), who reported that audiovisual translation frequently encounters semantic, stylistic, and idiomatic challenges due to learners' limited cultural awareness. Similarly, Hussain et al., (2025) emphasized that Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) constitutes an essential component of language learning because learners must understand the values, identities, and communication patterns of other societies within their cultural contexts. Therefore, cultural translation learning through Arabic films in this study not only developed students' translation skills but also fostered their ability to interpret cultural meanings and understand Arab communication practices from an intercultural perspective

3. The Role of the Pesantren Environment in Supporting Language and Cultural Internalization

Based on the analysis of the observational data, the findings revealed that the process of learning cultural expression translation at Ma'had Annuqayah extended beyond the classroom and continued within students' daily lives in the pesantren environment. Students regularly reused vocabulary, idioms, and expressions acquired from Arabic films in their interactions with peers, allowing the learning process to continue beyond formal instructional sessions. This finding suggests that the pesantren functions as a social environment that supports language retention, communicative practice, and cultural internalization through the everyday use of Arabic in social interactions.

This phenomenon indicates that language and cultural learning become more effective when learners are provided with communicative spaces that enable contextual and repeated language use. In this context, the pesantren creates an immersion environment that helps students retain vocabulary and understand the social functions of Arabic in a natural manner. This finding is consistent with Wang, (2025) who argued that immersive learning environments and repeated contextual exposure strengthen contextual memory and language retention by providing learners with more authentic and meaningful communicative experiences.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that social interaction within the pesantren environment contributes significantly to the development of students' intercultural communicative competence. Cong-Lem, (2025) emphasized that contemporary language learning should integrate Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) through learning environments that facilitate cultural interaction and authentic language use. Similarly, Brito et al., (2025) argued that learning environments promoting social participation and interpersonal communication can strengthen the internalization of language and culture. In the present study, the pesantren environment fulfilled this role because students not only received linguistic input from Arabic films but also internalized cultural expressions through continuous social communication in their daily lives.

Overall, these findings contribute to the development of cultural translation pedagogy in Arabic language learning within pesantren settings. Contextually, the study demonstrates that the pesantren serves not only as a formal educational institution but also as a social space that facilitates the internalization of Arabic language and culture through everyday communicative practices. Pedagogically, the study proposes an Arabic film-based cultural translation learning model consisting of repeated viewing, textual support, cultural discussion, and communicative

oral translation activities. Theoretically, the findings extend the literature on audiovisual pedagogy and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) by positioning Arabic films not merely as listening materials or audiovisual subtitle resources, but as instruments of cultural interpretation that integrate linguistic competence, intercultural understanding, and social communicative practice within the context of Islamic boarding school education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Arabic films function as an effective medium for cultural translation learning (*tarjamah*) at Nuqayah Islamic Boarding School in Guluk-Guluk by integrating linguistic input with authentic cultural, social, and communicative contexts through dialogues, idioms, dialects, and nonverbal cues. The findings reveal that repeated viewing, guided interpretation, and oral translation activities enable students to develop both linguistic understanding and intercultural awareness, although challenges remain in interpreting idiomatic expressions, dialectal variations, and culturally embedded meanings due to limited intercultural communicative competence. Furthermore, the pesantren environment strengthens learning outcomes through continuous exposure to and daily use of Arabic, thereby supporting language retention and contextual language use. Overall, this study contributes to audiovisual-based *tarjamah* pedagogy by positioning Arabic films as an integrative tool for linguistic and cultural learning, while highlighting the need for structured pedagogical scaffolding and further research to enhance students' interpretative competence in similar pesantren contexts.

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