"Epitome" Solution to Nahw Instruction: Strategies toward "I'rab Reading" Abilities for Students

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Over time, nahw (Arabic syntax) instruction has been conducted by traditional means. It used to be the al-qira'ah wa al-tarjamah method that was in use. But today, epitome emerges in the place of such a method. Epitome has been proven able to motivate students and to improve learning efficiency. This work is presented to describe not only the steps to nahw instruction by epitome, but also the factors that support its success. It manifests from the author's past research at Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Putri Al Ishlahiyah Malang, in which epitome was implemented in the nahw instruction for the students. Data were collected through observation of the instruction activity, interviews with the teachers, committee members, and students directly involved in the implementation of the epitome medium, and structured interviews with some alumni regarding the benefits of nahw for the community. This work suggests three points. First, with epitome, students have an easier time understanding nahw. Second, the students' inner motivation has a strong effect on their success in learning nahw, especially in i'rab. Third, epitome not only makes it easy for the students to learn nahw, but also provides them with opportunities to participate more actively in nahw learning, which, over time, has been regarded as difficult and unstimulating.

Key words: *Epitome, Nahw, Matn al-Ajrumiyyah, Students, I'rab.*

Introduction

Many have been of the view that learning Arabic, especially *nahw* rules, is arduous, tiresome, and unpleasing. Students from childhood to adulthood, including those of higher education age, have all shared this view. Bin Samah et al (2016), also stated the same idea that students who learn Arabic as a foreign language in a foreign country usually face difficulties to achieve proficiency in the language (Bin Samah, R., Puteh-Behak, F., Mat Saad, N. S., Mohd Ali, S., Darmi, R., & Harun, 2016). At *pondok pesantren* (i.e., Islamic boarding schools), students are trained to have the ability to study and review classic books (*kutub at-turats*) that are authored in Arabic. Among the ingredients required for the students to comprehend such books are the sciences of *nahw* and *sharaf* (Directorate General of Islamic Education, 2015). Data showed that over 80% of the students found *nahw* difficult. This comes as little wonder, as the Arabic language is written without *haraka*, which in Arabic functions as a vowel mark. The *haraka* fixed at the end of a word denotes the state of the word. Hence, an error in reading the end of the word will result in an error in determining the meaning. *Nahw*, in substance, refers to a set of rules commonly called *qawa'id* in Arabic, that function as a controller against mistakes in Arabic listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Studies in Arabic language instruction have to this time been inclined to revolve around three aspects. The *first* is around Arabic language instruction by traditional means. The existing studies have been based on the tradition passed down from generation to generation called *at-Thariqah at-Taqlidiyyah*. The *second* is around the Arabic language instruction's emphasis on the application of certain media. The media referred to here are both IT-based and non-IT-based. The *third* is around the involvement of cognitive aspects and students' critical reasoning in Arabic language instruction. It becomes apparent then that the question of epitome use in Arabic language instruction has slipped from researchers' discussions. Epitome in and of itself is associated with the second and third aspects. The second is because it is media-based, and the third is because it is a medium that is capable of encouraging students' cognitive powers and critical reasoning.

The aim of this study was to correct the persisting misunderstanding that learning Arabic language theories is always hard, depressing, and boring and that *nahw* instruction for students is static, mind-numbing, and void of media use. In accordance with such an aim, the following three questions are formulated. **First**, how is epitome implemented in *nahw* instruction in order to develop students' *i'rab* reading skills? **Second**, what constitutes factors that support the success of *nahw* learning by epitome? **Third**, what strategies are effective in the *nahw* instruction for the students?

This paper is based on three arguments. *First*, learning *nahw* by epitome goes through four inspiring phases: receptive phase, book material reading phase, explanation phase, and *i'rab*

reading phase. The students believe that *nahw* learning is easy and fun. *Second*, there are several factors that support students' success in learning *nahw* with epitome, enabling them to gain understanding of *nahw* in a short period of time: the students' intrinsic motivation, institutional support (in this case support from the *pesantren* in the form of facility and infrastructure), and cultural factors. *Third*, *nahw* learning strategies are designed to go along with students' needs, hence boosting their learning interest and ultimately yielding high skills. The instruction design starts with making simplifications of *nahw* rules to make it easy for the students to understand the subject matter easily.

Literature Review
Epitome

Epitome has become a prime program that represents the various concepts in instruction and shapes a sustainable cohesion. It was defined by (Faishol, 2018) as a conceptual structure that gives clarity to the entire content of an instructional material, in which case the content structure is organised in a clear, concrete manner from individual perspectives to facilitate understanding. In this context, epitome summarises something of importance and representative of the whole instruction in classified forms. In support of the aforementioned, (Lee, H. Y., Hoo, W. L., & Chan, 2015) identified epitome as a simplified framework through structured summaries for presenting the quality of an instructional material. (Richard, n.d.) added that the epitome framework is highly relevant for shifting knowledge understanding toward sustainability, allowing epitome to give analysis transformation for improving the quality of the knowledge (Häkkinen et al., 2017; May et al., 2012; Reigeluth, 2013).

In presenting ideas, epitome demonstrates multiple structures that can enhance collaboration/structuring of instructional materials. According to (Widodo, 2015), the structures in epitome include (1) motivational strategies, (2) analogies, (3) learning prerequisites, (4) content structure, and (5) supporting structure. Assaroundi et al. (2018), supported in a statement that elaborating on epitome would involve steps such as preparing the materials, organising and classifying the main concepts, and presenting summaries in the form of figures/codes or diagrams. In line with that, (Haryati, 2018), showed that epitome is part of an elaborating instruction, in which case it depicts the relationship of the main concepts, hence it frequently is said to make up the content framework of an instructional material. At large, it builds a structure in material presentation in order of the most central to the most peripheral part. Then, elaboration is applied to the end of every part with a summary and synthesis of the newly delivered content (Haryati, 2018).

Epitome is to be distinguished from advance organiser, in that, while advance organiser is presented at the abstract, memorisation level, epitome is presented at the concrete, meaningful, applicative level, instead. Thus, it is appropriate to say that epitome is

comparable to concrete content frameworks. Epitome is also counted as an initial instructional strategy. It can take the form of a conceptual or procedural or theoretical content framework, depending on the type of the content to be taught to the students. However, epitome covers only one type of subject content, which constitutes the most paramount part of the whole content to be taught (Degeng, 2013). (Reigeluth, C.M. dan Stein, 1983), firmly described different content structure using (epitome) for different content types. The conceptual structure is only to be used for conceptual content, procedural structure for procedural content, and theoretical structure for principal content. As a content framework, epitome covers only the essential minority of the subject matter contents, which later is to function as a context or framework for more detailed subject matter contents, whereas the summary contains all important parts of the subject matter contents. In epitome, subject matter contents are presented at the application level, meaning that it uses generality to shed light on new events (Merill, 1983), or uses various concepts to identify new examples (Reigeluth, C.M. dan Darwazeh, 1982).

The content framework featured in the book *Nahw al-Ajrumiyyah* is the one that takes the forms of classifications, categories, and principles of concepts. This book contains *nahw* principles such as *kalam*: its definition and divisions, *i'rab*: its definition and kinds, default marks of *i'rab*, their designations, and *al-mu'rabat*: divisions and examples, *fi'il*: its kinds and indicators, *raf'*-ized *isim*: *fa'il*, *maf'ul* whose *fa'il* is unmentioned, *mubtada' khabar*, *na'at*, *'atf*, *tawkeed*, *badal*, *nasb*-ized *isim*, *maf'ul bih*, *masdar*, *dharf zaman* and *dharf makan*, *khaal*, *tamyiiz*, *istisna'*, *la*, *munada*, *maf'ul min ajlih*, *maf'ul ma'ah*, and *mahfuudhaatul asmaa.'*

The epitome of the book *al-Ajrumiyyah* is a content framework that contains kinds of *i'rab*, default indicators along with their designations and some examples, derivative indicators along with their designations and examples, and examples of *i'rab*. Presenting this review on a sheet would suffice, and other chapters would be included. Such a sheet serves as the "content framework" of the book *al-Ajrumiyyah*, which consists of 24 chapters and a foreword, making up a total of 18 pages. The epitome employed in this research was *Jadwal an-Nahwi al-Awwal*, which was penned by Muhammad Maftuuhin Sholih al-Langitaany an-Nadawiy, the guardian of al-Ma'had al-Islamy Langitan and Bangil, East Java. It was validated by Shaykh H. Abdullah Faqih al-Langitaany Mudiir of al-Ma'had al-Islamy Langitan and Professor al-Ustadz Mahbub ar-Rahman al-Azhary, a Professor of Arabic Letters of Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama, Hindi.

The epitome medium of Maftuhin's work is a specific summary in the form of a table which combines content organisation and supporting contents. Classification starts from the simplest to the most complex. The content procedure consists of 1) forward chaining from the most complex level, 2) backward chaining, 3) hierarchical sequencing, 4) general-to-specific

sequencing (clusters of phases), and 5) simple-to-complex sequencing (Charles M. Reigeluth, 1983).

Nahw Learning

Nahw is a fundamental science which deals with grammar and wording in the Arabic language to form sentence structures. In learning a new language, learning the grammar of a language is very important for students. Grammars have been indispensable tools for learning foreign languages (Van Hal, T., & Anné, 2016). To avoid errors in Arabic utterances, as quoted from (Sehri, 2010), the science of *nahw* is used as a set of rules that govern how to put words together correctly and create (synthesise) innovations or new forms in communication. This is especially true in the rules of composing sentences in Arabic relating to *i'rab* (the changing of letters in sentences, either pronounced or supposed) and *bina'* (the last letter of a word under a certain circumstance) (Dodi, 2013). Dodi (2013), defined *nahw* as a configuration in the Arabic language whose states stand alone in the sentence structure, in which case it contains a set of rules, principles, and foundations of the language. In a simplified sense, *nahw* is the grammar of the Arabic language. It is often identified as a linguistic pillar that corrects passages in Arabic with rules that come with varying difficulty levels for each sentence (Hakim, 2013). Generally, grammar cannot only help language learners in acquiring a firm command of a foreign language, it is also seminal in enhancing the learners' understanding of general linguistics and language structures (Van Hal, T., & Anné, 2016). It is categorised into three different methods: (1) theoretical *nahw*, which is descriptive in nature, with some clear concepts; (2) analytical *nahw*, with use of sentences inclined more towards interpretation and analysis purposes using the most accurate methods; and (3) pedagogical *nahw*, which refers to the science that corrects utterances to prevent misinterpretation (Hakim, 2013).

To facilitate Arabic grammar (*al-nahw*) instruction, iteration and practicing of grammar from existing vocabulary will be required (Andrade & Baddeley, 2011). In support of the aforementioned, Saiegh-Haddad (2017), stated that grammar instruction can be performed by means of developing a synthesis model (for new ideas) that assists in word reading in Arabic. Hence, Arabic grammar instruction development is shaped into three models, namely, (1) understanding of vocalisation/articulation, (2) going in-depth morphologically into linguistics in representation of word meaning, and (3) using spoken language (Saiegh-Haddad, 2017). Understanding Arabic grammar is beneficial for language reading skills, and textually language processing increases variation with sizeable vocabulary (Meguro, 2019). According to Tammenga-Helmantel & Maijala (2019), for the effectiveness of the instruction, traditional, descriptive grammar uses shifts into inductive, communicative use. Hence, grammar instruction leans more towards reinforcement of grammar integration, instruction, and structure and portion with some repeating examples and discovery of the appropriate

structure (Tammenga-Helmantel, M & Maijala, 2019). The difference between the grammar instruction of the Arabic language and other languages rests on the emphasis of the verbal morphology (i.e., word changing) and syntax (i.e., the subject may transform into a noun or pronoun) (Uhlmann, 2012). The implementation of analytical *nahw* as shown in the sentence example under the synthesis model is what is required by "*i'rab* reading."

I'rab

I'rab belongs to the study of *nahw*. It refers to the changing of word endings due to the difference in the *amil* received, either explicitly or implicitly (Ash-Shonhaji, n.d.). Meanwhile, *amil* is anything that makes a state of word ending under a certain condition mandatory, be it *raf'*, *nasb*, *jaar* (*khafdh*), or *jazm* (Baijuri, n.d.). The state of *raf'* is indicated by default by a *dhamma* on the word end, the state of *nasb* by a *fatha*, the state of *jaar* or *khafdh* by *kasra*, and the state of *jazm* by *sukun*. The term "reading *i'rab*" denotes the practice of *nahw* rules by mention of *i'rab* signs in an Arabic sentence. This is done by mentioning the word type, word state, state mark, and reason. Take this sentence as an example: "*Abuuka rajulun shoolihun*/ اَبُوْكَ رَجُلٌ صَالِحٌ". With *i'rab*, this sentence is read: اَبُوْكَ /abuuka: أبو/abu mubtada'un wa huwa marfuu'un wa 'alaamatu raf'ihi al waawu liannahu asmaaul khamsah, wa huwa mudhaafun wa ك/al-kaafu fi mahalli jarrin mudhaafun ilaih, رجل/rojulun khabarun marfuu'un wa 'alaamatu raf'ihi dhammatun dhaahirotun fi aakhirihi liannahu ismun mufrad wahuwa maushuufun صالح/shaalihun shifatun marfuu'un wa 'alaamatu raf'ihi dhammatun dhaahirotun fi-aakhirihi liannahu ismun mufrad.

In the instance above, a single sentence can be a collection of several rules: 1) *mubtada' khabar*; 2) *asma al-khamsah*; 3) *an-na'atu*; 4) *'alaamaat ar-raf'i*; 5) *mahfuudhat al-asmaa'*; 6) *ma'rifat alaamat al-i'rab*. *Nahw* rules can be implemented by the students in *fusha* Arabic sentences.

Student Competence

Competence has been a support to the character building of each student in improving their abilities, skills, and understanding in the instructional process. (Baartman, L. K. J., & de Bruijn, 2011), identified student competence as the ability of each individual to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in accepting and practicing a lesson. Developing students' competence is needed through learning and teaching. Developing student competence first, through the strategies that follow, leads to the development of purpose that many career and major programs traditionally address (Galilee-Belfer, 2012). To improve and develop student competence, every teacher aims for two instructional goals: (1) fluency, the ability to write and speak easily, fluently, and expressively and (2) competence, the ability to understand and practice the material (Mora, J. C., & Valls-Ferrer, 2012). As stated by (Gooptu, 2018), to

improve the quality, the competencies in various fields should be trained. Other than involving competence in a technical term, competence development also requires changes in attitude, disposition, and identity, leaving impacts in the cultural, social, and political aspects. The teacher's role is, hence, critical to student competence development (Kunter et al., 2013; Sadler et al, 2013). According to Celik (2011), a teacher is responsible for competence development through guiding, teaching, and giving instruction for the purpose of increasing the students' ability to understand a material or phenomenon.

Student competence is supported by improvement of self-quality. According to (Kakkonen, 2012), there are three types of competence that can help improve student ability to understand a lesson: (1) learning ability; (2) social and communicative ability; and (3) situation recognition method. In the case study conducted by Purwanti (2016), language was found to be one of the factors that support student competence improvement. Language plays a vital role in one's knowledge, intellectual, social, and emotional development, which is important for his/her success in understanding every lesson (Purwanti, 2016). (Cebrián, G., & Junyent, 2015) agreed that students' competence that is continuously improved may have an influence on their decision-making, problem-solving, critical-thinking, and actions and motivate fresh ideas in a complex way. It is then used for problem-solving processes in the implementation of the instructional materials (Cebrián, G., & Junyent, 2015). However, students' competence is confined by self-capacity in deriving and understanding lessons. According to (Gooptu, 2018), in the improvement of students' skills, competence has a role that is linked to their capacity to measure their own lesson absorption abilities.

Methodology

This article was based on the author's experience teaching *nahw* at Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Putri Al Ishlahiyah Malang. Findings on how epitome was utilised in *nahw* instruction were gathered from a one-semester observation (approximately 5 months). Epitome was directly practiced by the author until ideal steps were identified for the purpose of improving the students' *i'rab* reading ability. Departing from the findings of previous years' observations that the *qawaid wa at-tarjamah* method had yet to successfully improve the *i'rab* reading ability, the author came to a decision that epitome should be implemented through four instructional phases.

Interview was a chosen method for figuring out the factors that supported epitome's success in supporting the students' *nahw* learning. It was conducted with three respondents of high, moderate, and low abilities as proven by high, moderate, and low test scores. Besides, an in-depth observation was carried out to find out about the facilities provided by the *pesantren* during the epitome implementation in the *nahw* instruction. Lastly, an indirect interview was

performed with eight randomly selected alumni to obtain information on the benefits of *nahw* for the community they received after graduating from the *pesantren*.

Meanwhile, in order to gather data on effective *nahw* instruction strategies, the author conducted a focus group discussion (FGD) with two *nahw al-ajrumiyyah* teachers. On the grounds that the previously implemented instructional method failed to achieve success, garner interest, and reach the desired level *i'rab* reading ability and that the author has gained a success in implementing epitome, it was agreed that epitome should be applied in the *nahw* instruction. Epitome implementation was considered important as *nahw* materials will always be of great use irrespective of time. Students must be able to read religious literature (*kitab kuning*, literally the yellow book), and *nahw* will provide them with a tool to do so.

Results and Findings
Epitome Implementation in Nahw Instruction to Improve I'rab Reading Ability

Epitome is implemented in *nahw* instruction in several phases to help the students study *nahw*. There are four of them that distinguish *nahw* instruction by epitome and *nahw* instruction by other methods.

First, **The Receptive Phase**. This phase is known as a conceptual introduction and motivational strategy phase. The students pay close attention to the epitome implementation while hearing the keywords of the material discussed. ***Second*, the book material reading phase**. Here, the students open their own books. They specifically read the material discussed during that meeting. For instance, they read the following in the *i'rab* chapter: *Al-i'rabu huwa taghyiiru awakhir al-kalim likhtilaafi al-awam al-addakhilati 'alaiha lafdzan au taqdiran. Wa aqsamuhu arba'atun raf'un wa nasbun wa khafdzun wa jazmun.* ***Third*, the explanation phase**. In this phase the teacher explains the material the students have read. He or she may also use the board marker to write down some keywords or writings for clarity, along with some examples. This phase is for the teacher to explain the concepts and the rules the students are learning. In this phase, the students experience no excessive difficulty as they have been assisted by epitome since the outset of the instruction. ***Lastly*, the *i'rab* reading phase**. In this phase, the students read some sentence examples to apply in a real situation the *nahw* rules they have learned. Reading *i'rab* mostly is done from Arabic to Arabic by breaking down several aspects, including the nature of a word, the state of the word in a sentence, the indicator of the state (*i'rab* indicator), and the reason for the *i'rab* indicator in reference to the word's essence.

In brief, the four phases above can be illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Phases of Nahw Instruction by Epitome

Phases of *Nahw* Instruction by Epitome
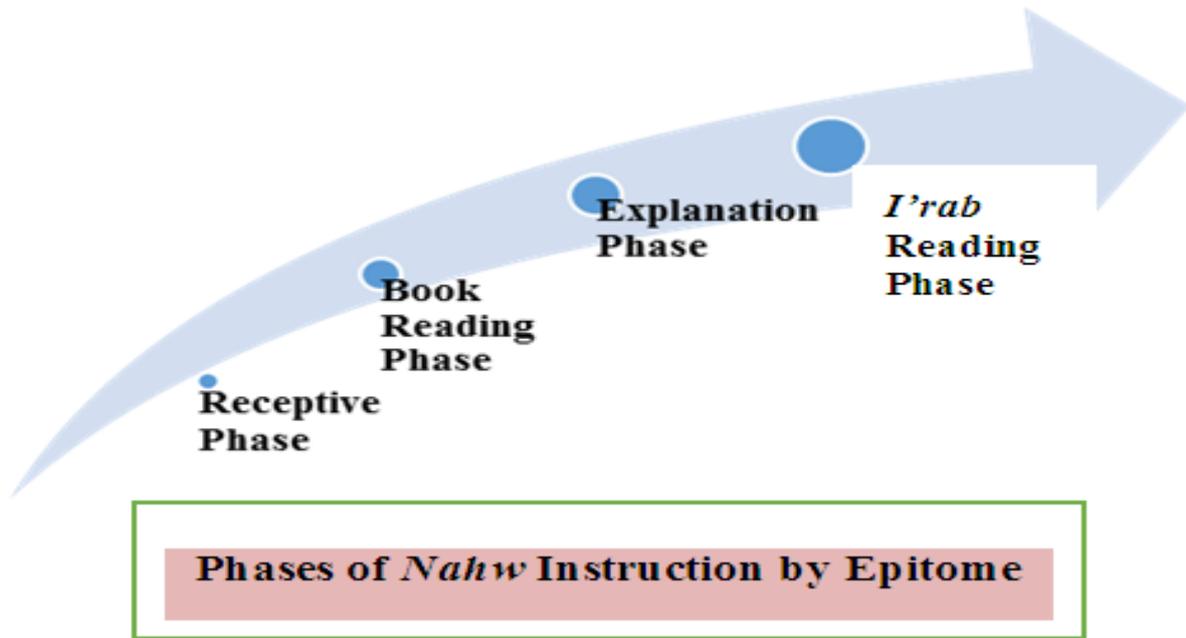
Factors Supporting the Success of Nahw Learning by Epitome

The students' success in *nahw* learning by epitome is supported by at least three factors. ***First, Personal Factor***. Here, the students are motivated to learn *nahw*, so instead of feeling drowsy, they maintain high spirits throughout the meeting from the beginning to the end. They participate in the instruction with passion. This comes as no surprise, because motivation serves as the "heart" of an instructional process, and it drives all the activity. Not only are they motivated, the students also take much pleasure in the process. They understand *nahw* faster and find it easy to memorise.

Table 1: Students' Response to Epitome

No	Student category	Answer to the question "What motivates the students to learn *nahw* by epitome?"
1	Low ability	Learning becomes simpler
2	Moderate ability	The students become more motivated and faster to understand because the materials are made more concise and organised
3	High ability	Epitome helps faster understanding, has greater practicality, helps identifying *i'rab* parts faster, makes it easy to memorise materials, and makes the materials more pithy

Source: Processed by researcher, 2019

Second, Institutional Factor. This factor is attached to the Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Putri Al Ishlahiyah Malang. The institution that was formally inaugurated in 2009 currently has about 130 students, all of whom are female students of public and private higher education institutions in Malang. Most of them pursue education at Universitas Negeri Malang. This Madrasah Diniyyah features a combination of three levels: *ula* (primary), *wustho* (secondary), and *'ulya* (tertiary). Ninety percent of the teachers hold Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees. Such a qualification makes it possible to create innovations in the instruction, be it in the strategies, methods, media, evaluation, or other aspects. An example of such innovations is the use of epitome as a medium in the *nahw* instruction.

Table 2: Supporting Factors in Epitome Use Success

No	Aspects in Epitome Use Success	Manifestation
1	Institutional factor	Providing epitome for all students
2	Cultural factor	Benefits of *nahw* for completing the task of teaching Arabic and Islamic subjects at MI, MTs, MA, and Ma'had

Source: Processed by researcher, 2019

Third, Cultural Factor. The third factor that prompts epitome use is the benefits of *nahw* for students or alumni. Other than studying at the *pesantren*, they also study at their universities. At the universities, they pursue varying disciplines, but after graduating from the *pesantren*, most of them teach reading the Qur'an or Islamic subjects in addition to the disciplines they major in. It is imperative for them to master *nahw*. Hence, epitome is present to help them understand it.

Table 3: The Benefits of *Nahw* for the Community

No	Alumni's majors at university	Alumni's activity in the community to "put *nahw* into use" after graduating from the *pesantren* and the university
1	Geography	Teaching Islamic subjects
2	Psychology	Teaching Arabic at Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah
3	Management	Teaching Islamic subjects
4	Chemistry	Teaching Islamic subjects
5	Biology	Teaching Islamic subjects at Ma'had Madrasah Aliyyah
6	Arabic Language	Teaching the Arabic language at Madrasah Ibidaiyyah
7		Teaching the Arabic language at Madrasah Tsanawiyyah
8		Teaching the Arabic language at Ma'had

Source: Processed by researcher, 2019

Effective Nahw Instructional Strategies for Students

Effective *nahw* instructional strategies means those that accommodate the students' needs. These strategies cover at least the following three elements: (1) goals towards the ability to apply *i'rab*; (2) simplified material delivery through epitome; and (3) evaluation towards rules application intensity.

The aim of *nahw* instruction is formulated to involve the students' ability to apply *i'rab* to Arabic sentences in Arabic. The aim is direction; if the direction is clear, the activity conducted will also become clear. Some indicators can be applied to go in that direction. They include the abilities to mention the type of a word, the state of the word, the state mark, and the reason for such state mark. If these indicators manifest in the instructional process, the students' ability to read *i'rab* will show.

The second component is the strategies, methods, or media that allow for simplified material delivery. This component is the realisation of the second formulated aim. All of the teacher's and students' activities must be performed in the direction of realising the *i'rab* reading ability. The use of these strategies, methods, or media must be based on the material characteristics, the students' conditions, and the obstacles that get in the way of the material delivery. *Nahw* materials are considered difficult and complicated, while the *pesantren* students enrolled in this research are students of higher education institutions. It is certain that they have high reasoning skills and critical thinking habits. However, the time limit (two semesters/30 meetings = 16 x 2 – 2) poses a hurdle to the delivery of a wide range of themes to be covered. The book *al-Ajrumiyyah* consists of 24 chapters, some of which cover several *fasal* (sub-chapters), while the time provided per meeting is no more than 90 minutes. Under such a condition, epitome use becomes critical and thus highly recommended, since it has the ability to simplify the materials and allows for efficient use of time.

The next strategy is evaluation through intensive practice. Through evaluation, one can derive information about the effectiveness of an instruction. Epitome as a medium can encourage the students to practice reading *i'rab*. A high frequency of practice allows for a high level of retention, hence making it even easier to achieve success. The students practice *i'rab* in groups because it will permit them not only to improve their abilities individually but also to hone their socialising skills, as well as to have their errors corrected by others.

Table 4: Epitome Use Strategies

No	Strategies	Steps
1	Goal setting	Students' abilities in *nahw*
		Students' abilities in reading *i'rab*
2	Epitome use	Use of epitome as a *nahw al-ajrumiyyah* instructional medium with regard to reading rules
3	Evaluation	*I'rab* practice in groups after the teacher's explanation

Source: Processed by research, 2019

Figure 2. Epitome Medium for *Nahw al-Ajrumiyyah* Instruction
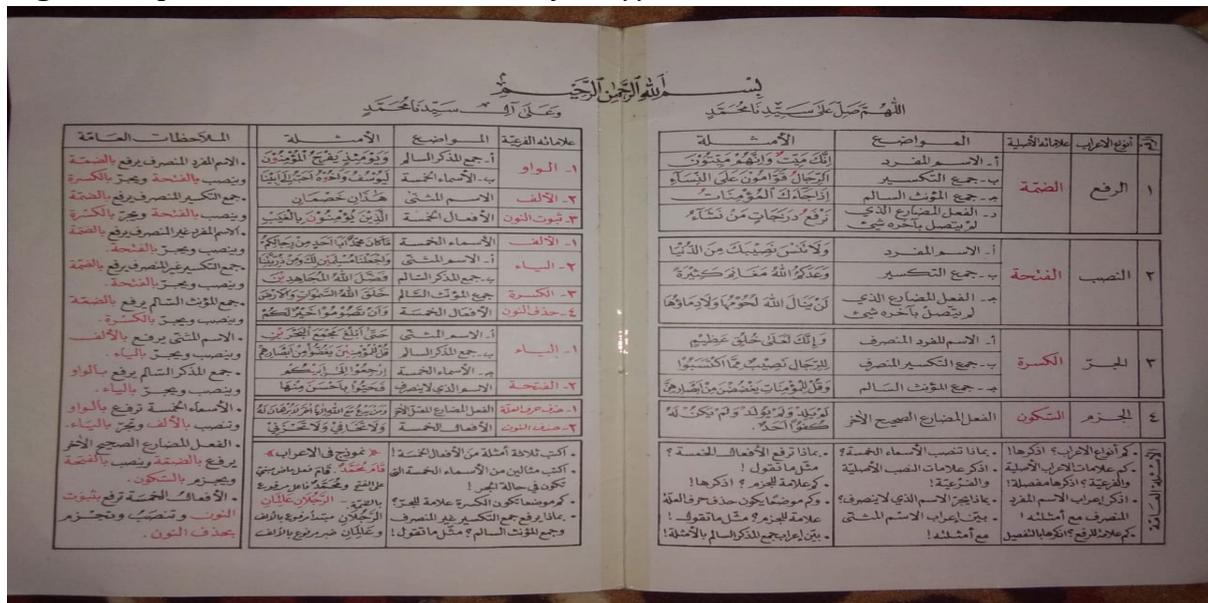
Source: Sholeh, Muhammad Maftuhin. (tt). Jadwalun Nahwi. Kebonsari Sukodadi Jatim Indonesia with Flow Chart model (Charles M. Reigeluth, 1983).

Epitome as a Facilitating Means for Nahw Instruction

The four steps to reading *i'rab* in the implementation of epitome in *nahw* instruction are essential, thus they must be supported. To support the success of the epitome implementation, the supporting factors must be prepared. In the receptive phase, which refers to the phase of epitome reading by the students (silently) with some keywords given by the teachers, some pre-instruction steps should be taken in a conducive environment. For instance, the classroom should be free of unnecessary noise and the students must have been prepared for the instruction. The book reading phase should be supported by the prerequisite abilities to read with fluency and with the right intonation and to understand the meanings of some words. The explanation phase requires the teacher to have a clear voice and to speak in an easy-to-understand way. In addition, the teacher should also provide some examples. Meanwhile, the

i'rab reading phase needs active cooperation within groups for the students to correct each other, as well as individual readiness to read in turn after one another. These supporting factors as a whole should be present as they serve as a key to the success of the epitome implementation in *nahw* instruction.

The use of epitome in the *nahw* instruction for building the students' *i'rab* reading ability in the four phases above is a systemised process both the teacher and the students must go through. It is worth noting because instruction always starts with receipt of a "message." Through these phases, the students gain an initial picture of the material to be learned. The students pay attention to the rules through the signs that occur and the link between the signs in one word and then make a generalisation through some *i'rab* examples. The next phase of book reading is critical to gaining in a concrete way the depiction of the rules learned. In the explanation phase, clarity can be achieved through some practical examples. Meanwhile, the last phase of *i'rab* reading provides the students with stimulation in order for them not to forget the materials learned and in order to strengthen the students' memories through practice.

Nahw Learning Motivation and Success

The students' success in learning *nahw* by epitome is supported by a minimum of three mutually supporting factors, namely, personal, institutional, and cultural factors. The three factors are recognised as the education trilogy: family, educational institution, and community. In this case, family represents the individual factor, educational institution the *pesantren*, and the community the cultural factor. Family is highly influential to an individual's motivation, disposition, and interest. He or she grows up in the family environment, hence the habits, tendencies, and life motivations of the family influence the individuals within. Most, if not almost all, the students who study at the *pesantren* are from families whose other members also pursued education at *pesantren*. Here is where the students' interest in learning Islamic subjects, including in *nahw*, was built. *Pesantren* is an educational institution which is entrusted with the responsibility to realise Muslim families' aspiration to have children who master Islamic subjects. The community must also provide a place or facility for the alumni to apply their knowledge at the existing educational institutions.

A collaboration between the three educational elements—individual/family, institution/*pesantren*, and culture/community—is necessary and even important to realise. This is driven by a number of reasons. 1) The development of a country is determined by the quality of the education, while the quality of the religious life is determined by the role of *pesantren* in running its instructional functions. Such functions can be performed through not only routine *diniyyah* education, but also innovations in the instruction. One of such

innovations is the implementation of epitome in *nahw* instruction. Especially in the present day, the government pays a considerable attention to *pesantren*, hence the socialisation of any innovations can be realised. 2) *Pesantren*'s contribution is determined by how well it runs its role in advancing its instruction for the purpose of producing religious fighters.

Epitome: Effective Strategy for Nahw Learning

Instructional strategies are selected to ensure the success of the students' *nahw* learning. Epitome as an instrument can improve the effectiveness of the *nahw* instruction. It plays four characters, namely motivation activator, cognitive strategy activator, summariser, and connector for several rules, all of which support the students' success in *nahw* learning.

***First*, *Motivation Activator*.** Epitome is a motivation driver for students. Epitome presents the concept of a discipline as a collection of rules, the association of some signs of a rule in one word, and how such an association is applied in generalising *i'rab*. This is broken down in columns. The right side of a page presents the default *i'rab* indicators, while the left side the derivative *i'rab* indicators, showing clearly the state of each, be it *raf'*, *nasb*, *jaar* or *khafdh*, and *jazm*. Two different colours are used, namely, red and black. Red is for the default and derivative indicators, either in the *i'rab* indicators column or the example column, in the *al-mulahadzah al-'ammah* column or in the texts of the *i'rab* examples.

Second, Cognitive Strategy Activator. Epitome is also capable of driving the students' cognitive aspect. That is, epitome's appearance can drive the students' thinking processes thanks to its presence that is different from other texts. The derivative *i'rab* indicators column shows parts of the concept of the principles of each *i'rab* state. Meanwhile, the *al-mulahadzah al-ammah* column shows the concept of the link between *i'rab* states of *al-mawadzi'*/the place that has an *i'rab* indicator and some types of *i'rab* indicators, be it default or derivative. This drives the students, who also study at universities and thus are often characterised by critical reasoning, to think.

Third*, *Summariser. Epitome summarises some chapters, hence giving a value of "practicality." This practicality allows for convenience, as it gets rid of some troubles. Practical things make it easy for someone to study. In other words, the efficiency that comes with it leads to time and money saving. It saves time because it does not take the students much time to understand the materials maximally.

***Fourth*, *Connector for Several Rules*.** There are two types of relationship that are introduced by epitome in this research: 1) within-rule relationship and 2) between-rule relationship. Within-rule relationship means that derivative *i'rab* indicators have a close relationship with default *i'rab* indicators. For instance, *waw*, *alif*, and *nun* as part of the *i'rab* indicators in the

state of *raf'* can replace *dhamma*. Meanwhile, between-rule relationship refers to the relationship between the states of *i'rab* through *al-mawadzi'*/the place which possesses an *i'rab* indicator and some *i'rab* indicators, either default or derivative, or through linking the indicators. For instance, *isim mufrad munsharif* is *raf'*ized by *dhamma*, *nasb*ized by *fatha*, and *jaar*ized by *kasra*. By between it refers to the states of *i'rab* (*raf'*, *nasb*, and *jaar*).

Conclusion

The four characters played by epitome, namely, motivation activator, cognitive strategy activator, summariser, and connector for several rules, turn out to be able to motivate the students, create fun, and strengthen their spirit, hence allowing them to master the *nahw* rules well.

From the in-depth observations, it was found that the application of the four phases (the receptive, book reading, explanation, and *i'rab* reading phases) in *nahw* instruction by epitome is able to give a concrete contribution to the realisation of the students' *i'rab* reading ability (practicing Arabic grammatical rules). This is in line with the data from the field: the individual support is shown in the students' motivation and positive responses to epitome, institutional support in the teacher's preparing epitome figures for each student, the teacher's coming from a doctoral educational background, and the representativeness of the classroom, and cultural support in the benefit of *nahw* in the community after the students' graduation.
However, epitome in this research is implemented in *nahw* instruction only over a span of one semester. It is hoped that follow-up research is conducted over a longer period of time to find more benefits of the medium. This greater variety in the medium's advantages will strengthen the medium's role in instruction. This epitome implementation is expected to contribute more to the educational literature in Indonesia, especially in *nahw* instruction in *pesantren*.

This research is confined to how epitome motivates students of higher education age to study *nahw* to the point they can read *i'rab*. It is expected that a study on the implementation of epitome on child students will be conducted in the future in order to add more variation.

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