

Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Speaking Arabic in the Kalam Course

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Abstract

Arabic speaking skill (maharah al-kalam) is one of the essential competencies in Arabic language learning at the university level. However, many students still experience various difficulties in using Arabic actively and communicatively. This study was conducted due to the low level of students' speaking proficiency, which may affect the effectiveness of Arabic language learning as well as students' academic readiness to comprehend and use Arabic in higher education settings. The study aims to analyze students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course and to identify the factors influencing these difficulties. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving students and the lecturer of the Kalam course. The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that students' difficulties were influenced by both linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic factors included limited vocabulary mastery, difficulties in applying nahwu and sharaf rules, weak pronunciation of Arabic letters, and low spontaneous speaking ability. Meanwhile, non-linguistic factors comprised low self-confidence, speaking anxiety, lack of practice, limited language environment, and teaching methods that were not fully communicative. This

study contributes to the development of maharah al-kalam learning through more communicative approaches and the establishment of a supportive language environment. Future studies are recommended to develop technology-based Arabic speaking learning models integrated with bi'ah lughawiyah.

Keywords : Maharah al-Kalam, Speaking Difficulties, Arabic Language, Arabic Language Learning, University Students

A. Introduction

Arabic is one of the international languages that plays a significant role in education, religion, culture, and global communication.¹ In Indonesia, Arabic is a compulsory subject in various Islamic higher education institutions because it functions not only as a medium for understanding Islamic sources but also as a tool for academic communication.² In Arabic language learning, speaking skill (maharah al-kalam) occupies a highly important position as it serves as an indicator of students' ability to use the language actively and communicatively.³ Speaking ability requires not only mastery of vocabulary and grammatical structures, but also confidence, fluency, and the ability to express ideas spontaneously in particular communicative situations.⁴

Nevertheless, Arabic speaking skill remains one of the most difficult competencies for university students to master.⁵ Many students are able to understand linguistic theories and grammatical structures but experience difficulties when applying them in oral communication.⁶ This condition indicates a gap between theoretical mastery and practical speaking performance in Arabic language learning.⁷ Such difficulties constitute a serious issue because oral communication competence is one of the primary objectives expected in foreign language learning, including Arabic.⁸

¹ Devi Rafika Sari, Ahmad Fadhel, and Syakir Hidayat, "The Effects of Using Animation Movies Toward Students Understanding on Sharaf Rules At Twelve Grade of Religious Class At MAN 2 Samarinda In Academic Year 2020/2021," *Borneo Journal of Language and Education* 1, no. 1 (April 2, 2021): 81–95, <https://journal.uinsi.ac.id/index.php/bjle/article/view/5271>.

² Evi Zuliyanti, Mustamin Fattah, and Ahmad Fadhel Syakir Hidayat, "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Kooperatif Tipe Group Investigation Dalam Meningkatkan Keterampilan Tarjamah Siswa," *Jurnal Tarbiyah Dan Ilmu Keguruan Borneo* 1, no. 3 (June 29, 2020): 283–95, <https://doi.org/10.21093/JTIKBORNEO.V1I3.3802>.

³ Syakir Hidayat, Haniah Haniah, and Sabaruddin Garancang, "Al Kitab Al Dirasi Al'Arabiyah Baina Yadaik," (الطموحات) *EL-THUMUHAT* 2, no. 1 (2019): 25–37.

⁴ Izzuddin Musthafa and Acep Hermawan, "Metodologi Penelitian Bahasa Arab (Konsep Dasar, Strategi, Metode, Teknik)," *Remaja Rosdakarya*, 2018.

⁵ Ahmad Fadhel Syakir Hidayat, "'Al-Arabiyyah Baina Yadaik' Textbook (An Evaluative Descriptive Analysis Study)" (Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, 2019).

⁶ Ahmad Fadhel Syakir Hidayat and Faradilla Zulvanni Anggraini, "العلاقة بين القدرة على قراءة القرآن، "بالقدرة على مهارة القراءة،" *Shaut Al Arabiyyah* 9, no. 1 (n.d.): 78–87.

⁷ R Rahmatia and A F S Hidayat, "Pengaruh Metode Bermain Terhadap Penguasaan Mufrodlat Siswa MTS Sabilarrayad," *Borneo Journal of Language and Education*, 2021.

⁸ Ahmad Fuad Effendy, "Metode Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Malang: Al-Misykat*, 2009.

The phenomenon of students' low speaking ability in the Kalam course is influenced by various linguistic and non-linguistic factors.⁹ Linguistic factors include limited vocabulary mastery, weak understanding of nahwu and sharaf rules, and pronunciation errors (makhrāj).¹⁰ Meanwhile, non-linguistic factors involve low self-confidence, speaking anxiety, lack of learning motivation, and the absence of a supportive language environment for communication practice. According to Tarigan,¹¹ speaking skill requires continuous practice and a communicative environment in order for learners to become accustomed to using language actively.

In the context of higher education, maharah al-kalam instruction often remains theoretically oriented and provides limited opportunities for intensive speaking practice. Students tend to spend more time learning language structures rather than developing communicative competence. As a result, students frequently become passive during Kalam classes and encounter difficulties when asked to engage in dialogues or express opinions in Arabic. This condition demonstrates that the learning process has not fully succeeded in creating a communicative atmosphere capable of improving students' confidence and speaking fluency.

Previous studies have shown that the problems associated with maharah al-kalam learning have become a major concern in Arabic language education research. Bukhori explained that students' speaking difficulties are influenced by limited vocabulary mastery and low intensity of speaking practice.¹² Another study conducted by Mohammed et al. found that psychological factors, such as fear of making mistakes and embarrassment when speaking in front of the class, were the primary causes of students' low participation in Kalam learning.¹³ In addition, an unsupportive learning environment also affects students' communication abilities in Arabic.

On the other hand, technological advancement and the globalization of education require students to possess better foreign language communication skills. Arabic is no longer studied solely for understanding religious texts but is also used in international academic forums, seminars, and student exchange programs in various Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, Arabic speaking proficiency has

⁹ Jamaluddin Shiddiq et al., "Ujian Munaqosyah Mahasiswa PBA IAIN Ponorogo: Analisis Psikolinguistik Pada Senyapan Dan Kilir Lidah," *An Nabighoh* 24, no. 2 (2022): 185–98; Rijal Mahdi and Ahmad Asri Lubis, "Perspectives on the Arabic Language From University Student: Between Reality and Hope," *Izdihar Journal of Arabic Language Teaching Linguistics and Literature* 3, no. 1 (2020): 45–58, <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v3i1.11757>.

¹⁰ Irsal Amin et al., "Student Perception of the Development of Arabic Learning Model in Intensive Learning Program at IAIN Padangsidempuan Language Development Center," *Lisanan Arabiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 6, no. 1 (July 3, 2022): 69–86, <https://doi.org/10.32699/LIAR.V6I1.2613>.

¹¹ Henry Guntur Tarigan, "Berbicara; Sesebagai Suatu Keterampilan Berbahasa," 2019.

¹² Evi Muzaiyidah Bukhori, "Problematika Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab (Maharah Kalam) Mahasiswa Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Ilmu Keguruan IAIN Jember," *Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu IAIN Jember*, 2021.

¹³ Rawezh Mohammed and Latif Yahya Hamad, "Investigating Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among the Kurdish EFL Students: A Case Study at a Public University," *Alustath Journal For Human and Social Sciences* 60, no. 1 (2021): 77–92.

become an essential competence that students must possess in order to compete in academic and professional settings. This indicates that maharah al-kalam learning is highly relevant to the current demands of higher education.

Although numerous studies on Arabic language learning difficulties have been conducted, most of them primarily focus on linguistic aspects such as grammar and vocabulary mastery. Research examining psychological factors and learning environments in the context of Kalam learning remains relatively limited. Furthermore, studies specifically analyzing students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in Kalam courses at the university level have not been extensively explored in depth. Therefore, a research gap still exists and requires further investigation.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the theory of second language acquisition, which explains that language learning success is influenced by both internal and external learner factors. Krashen argued that anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence significantly influence an individual's success in learning a foreign language.¹⁴ In addition, Brown emphasized that speaking ability develops through active, interactive, and continuous communicative practice.¹⁵ Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of students' difficulties in speaking Arabic is necessary in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the contributing factors.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic factors in analyzing students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course. This study does not merely focus on limitations in language mastery but also highlights psychological aspects and the learning environment that influence students' communicative abilities. Through this approach, the study is expected to provide a more comprehensive description of the problems encountered in maharah al-kalam learning in higher education.

Based on the explanations above, this study aims to analyze students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course, identify the factors underlying these difficulties, and describe their implications for Arabic language learning in higher education. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich scholarly discussions on maharah al-kalam learning and second language acquisition. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as an evaluation material and reference for lecturers and study program administrators in developing more effective, communicative, and student-centered Arabic speaking learning strategies.

B. Literature Review

Arabic Language Learning in Higher Education

Arabic language learning in higher education refers to the process of developing students' linguistic competencies, which include listening (istima'), speaking (kalam), reading (qira'ah), and writing (kitabah) skills.¹⁶ In the context of higher education, Arabic learning is not solely intended to facilitate the

¹⁴ Stephen Krashen, "Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition" (Pergamon Press, 1982).

¹⁵ H Douglas Brown, "Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices.," 2010.

¹⁶ Khairy Abusyairy et al., "Pengaruh Media Video Berbahasa Arab Terhadap Keterampilan Mendengar Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Borneo Journal of Primary Education* 2, no. 3 (October 3, 2022): 125–37, <https://doi.org/10.21093/BJPE.V2I3.5588>.

understanding of religious texts, but also to develop students' academic and social communication abilities.¹⁷ According to ahmadi, Arabic language instruction should be directed toward communicative competence so that students are able to use Arabic actively in various situations.¹⁸ Therefore, Arabic language learning requires strategies, methods, and environments that support authentic language use.

Arabic language learning in higher education also requires the integration of theoretical and practical aspects.¹⁹ Students are not only expected to understand the rules of nahwu and sharaf, but also to apply them in both oral and written communication. This is consistent with the view of Effendy,²⁰ who stated that the success of Arabic language learning is determined by learners' ability to use the language in real communicative contexts. Therefore, Arabic instruction should be designed communicatively in order to provide students with direct experience in actively using Arabic.

The Concept of Maharah al-Kalam

Maharah al-kalam refers to speaking skill in Arabic, which requires the ability to convey ideas, opinions, and information orally in a proper and effective manner.²¹ Speaking skill is considered one of the primary indicators of success in mastering a foreign language because it reflects the active use of language.²² Tarigan explained that speaking is the ability to produce articulated sounds in order to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings to others.²³

In Arabic language learning, maharah al-kalam aims to enable students to communicate fluently, accurately, and communicatively in Arabic. According to Astina et al, Arabic speaking skill involves several essential components, including vocabulary mastery (mufradat), grammar (nahwu-sharaf), pronunciation (makhraj), speaking fluency, and the ability to understand interlocutors.²⁴

¹⁷ Abdullah Sungkar, "Evaluasi Peran Dan Kontribusi Organisasi HMJ PBA UIN Raden Intan Lampung Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Bahasa Arab Mahasiswa," *Tsaqofiya Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab lain Ponorogo* 4, no. 2 (2022): 174–87, <https://doi.org/10.21154/tsaqofiya.v4i2.93>.

¹⁸ Maswan Ahmadi, "Usluub Ta'liim Maharah Al Kalaam Fi Dhau' Nadzhariyah Al Ta'liim Skinner," *Al-Waraqah Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 3, no. 2 (2022): 59–69, <https://doi.org/10.30863/awrq.v3i2.3735>.

¹⁹ Ahmad Madkur, Yuliana Friska, and Lisnawati Lisnawati, "Translanguaging Pedagogy in ELT Practices: Experiences of Teachers in Indonesian Pesantren-Based Schools," *Voices of English Language Education Society* 6, no. 1 (2022): 130–43, <https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v6i1.5136>.

²⁰ Aziz Fahrurrozi et al., "Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Inovatif," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 17, no. 1 (2020): 22–35.

²¹ Bunga Ayu Wulandari, Matthew Piscioneri, and Wahyuni Ikram, "Examining Students' Challenges in Oracy in Academic Context Classes," *International Journal of Language Education*, 2021, 598–615, <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v5i1.16002>.

²² Siyuan Han, Yiman Li, and Syed Arslan Haider, "Impact of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety on Higher Education Students Academic Success: Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence and Moderating Influence of Classroom Environment," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.945062>.

²³ Tarigan, "Berbicara; Ssebagai Suatu Keterampilan Berbahasa."

²⁴ Chairani Astina, Umi Baroroh, and Rifqi Aulia Rahman, "Learning Maharah Al-Kalam Through Verb and Noun Forming Using the Qiyas Method," *Ijas Indonesian Journal of Arabic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2022): 17, <https://doi.org/10.24235/ijas.v4i1.9776>.

Therefore, Kalam instruction should be conducted through intensive and continuous communicative practice.

Brown further explained that speaking ability in a foreign language requires mastery of both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects simultaneously.²⁵ Linguistic aspects include vocabulary, language structure, and phonology, while non-linguistic aspects involve self-confidence, motivation, and the courage to speak.²⁶ Thus, maharah al-kalam instruction should not merely focus on linguistic theory but also on developing students' psychological readiness for communication.²⁷

Learning Difficulties in Maharah al-Kalam

Learning difficulty refers to a condition in which learners experience obstacles in understanding or mastering learning materials, resulting in suboptimal learning outcomes. In the context of maharah al-kalam, learning difficulties may include problems in sentence construction, limited vocabulary, pronunciation errors, and the inability to speak spontaneously. According to Végliá and Ruiz, learning difficulties are influenced by both internal and external learner factors.²⁸

Difficulties in speaking Arabic often arise because students are not accustomed to using Arabic in daily communication. Gajewska explained that students experience speaking difficulties due to both linguistic and non-linguistic factors.²⁹ Linguistic factors include weak mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, whereas non-linguistic factors include shyness, low self-confidence, and the absence of a supportive language environment.

Furthermore, students' difficulties in maharah al-kalam may also be influenced by teaching methods that are excessively theory-oriented. Zubaidillah and Nuruddaroini (2022) found that students experienced difficulties in speaking skills due to the lack of habituation in direct Arabic language practice.³⁰ This indicates that Kalam learning requires a communicative approach that provides students with opportunities to use Arabic actively and spontaneously.

Linguistic Factors in Arabic Speaking Difficulties

²⁵ Brown, "Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices."

²⁶ Margaret Kehoe et al., "The Relationship Between Lexical and Phonological Development in French-Speaking Children: A Longitudinal Study," *Journal of Speech Language and Hearing Research* 63, no. 6 (2020): 1807–21, https://doi.org/10.1044/2020_jslhr-19-00011.

²⁷ Mamnunah Mamnunah, Syihabuddin Syihabuddin, and Yayan Nurbayan, "Policy Implementation of the Sabilillah Spectacular Stage (Sss) Program to Increase Students' Speaking Skills," *Arabiyat Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 8, no. 1 (2021): 106–17, <https://doi.org/10.15408/a.v8i1.20661>.

²⁸ Alexandra Pardos Végliá and María González Ruiz, "Intervención Sobre Las Funciones Ejecutivas (FE) Desde El Contexto Educativo," *Revista Iberoamericana De Educación* 78, no. 1 (2018): 27–42, <https://doi.org/10.35362/rie7813269>.

²⁹ Klaudia Gajewska, "Polish Pre- And Upper-Intermediate Learners' Opinions on the Significance of Linguistic and Non-Linguistic Determinants of Speech in Developing Their EFL Speaking Skill: A Quantitative Study," *Crossroads a Journal of English Studies*, no. 30(3) (2020): 57–76, <https://doi.org/10.15290/cr.2020.30.3.04>.

³⁰ Kenza Saou, "The Effects of L1 Interference on the Occurrence of Code-Switching in the Algerian Context," *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* 22, no. 1 (2022): 221–40, <https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes2000.22.1.12>.

Linguistic factors are factors directly related to language elements. In maharah al-kalam learning, linguistic factors include vocabulary mastery, grammar, pronunciation, and the ability to understand Arabic sentence structures. According to Saou, limited vocabulary mastery is one of the primary obstacles faced by students in speaking Arabic because vocabulary forms the basis of communication.

In addition to vocabulary, mastery of nahwu and sharaf also plays an important role in speaking skills. Students frequently experience difficulties in determining word forms, using verbs correctly, and constructing grammatically accurate sentences. This condition often causes students to fear making mistakes while speaking. Brown stated that an imbalance between theoretical language mastery and communicative practice may hinder learners' speaking fluency.³¹

Phonological aspects or pronunciation also constitute an essential component of Arabic language learning.³² Several Arabic sounds, such as ح, خ, and ع, do not exist in the Indonesian language; therefore, students require special training to pronounce them correctly. Pronunciation errors may affect meaning and reduce students' confidence when speaking Arabic.³³

Non-Linguistic Factors in Arabic Speaking Difficulties

In addition to linguistic factors, Arabic speaking difficulties are also influenced by non-linguistic factors. These factors include psychological, social, and environmental aspects of students' learning experiences.³⁴ Through the Affective Filter Theory, Krashen explained that anxiety, low motivation, and lack of self-confidence may hinder second language acquisition.³⁵ Students who are afraid of making mistakes tend to become passive and reluctant to use Arabic in communication.

Feelings of embarrassment and fear of being laughed at while speaking constitute major obstacles for students in Kalam learning. Such conditions cause students to prefer remaining silent rather than attempting to speak. According to Tarigan (2015), speaking skill requires repeated practice and communicative courage in order for learners to become accustomed to using language actively.³⁶

The language environment (bi'ah lughawiyah) also greatly influences students' speaking abilities. Dubiner explained that an active language environment can help learners become accustomed to using Arabic in daily life.³⁷

³¹ Brown, "Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices."

³² Sara Fürstenau, Yağmur Çelik, and Simone Plöger, "Language Comparison as an Inclusive Translanguaging Strategy: Analysis of a Multilingual Teaching Situation in a German Primary School Classroom," 2020, 145–62, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-28128-1_9.

³³ Ana Marina do Val Barros, "Pronunciation Difficulties in the Consonant System Experienced by Arabic Speakers When Learning English After the Age of Puberty," n.d., <https://doi.org/10.33915/etd.766>.

³⁴ Siti Rahmah Borham et al., "Development of the E-Muhadatsah Kit for Non-Arabic Speakers in Malaysian Institutions of Higher Learning: A Need Analysis," *Journal of Techno Social* 14, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.30880/jts.2022.14.01.010>.

³⁵ Krashen, "Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition."

³⁶ Tarigan, "Berbicara; Ssebagai Suatu Keterampilan Berbahasa."

³⁷ Deborah Dubiner, "Second Language Learning and Teaching: From Theory to a Practical Checklist," *Tesol Journal* 10, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.398>.

Conversely, the limited use of Arabic outside the classroom reduces students' opportunities to practice speaking naturally.

Second Language Acquisition Theory

This study employs second language acquisition theory as its theoretical foundation for understanding students' difficulties in speaking Arabic. Stephen Krashen explained that success in learning a foreign language is influenced by language input, motivation, learning environment, and affective conditions.³⁸ According to this theory, students are more likely to acquire speaking skills effectively when they receive sufficient language exposure and are supported by an environment that encourages active communication.

In addition, communicative language teaching theory also serves as a theoretical basis for this study. Eddeen argued that language learning should be oriented toward the use of language for authentic communication rather than merely mastering grammatical structures.³⁹ Therefore, maharah al-kalam instruction should employ a communicative approach that enables students to engage directly in spoken interaction across various contexts.

C. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course based on the experiences, behaviors, and perceptions of the research participants. According to John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, qualitative research is used to explore and understand meanings derived from social or human problems through data collection in natural settings.⁴⁰ In the context of this study, the descriptive approach was employed to systematically and factually describe the various factors causing students' difficulties in maharah al-kalam.

This research was conducted in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris (UINSI) Samarinda. The research site was selected because the Kalam course is one of the core subjects requiring students to possess active communication skills in Arabic. The study focused on students who had taken the Kalam course so that they had direct experience related to the process of learning Arabic speaking skills. The research location was determined purposively by considering its relevance to the objectives of the study.⁴¹

The research participants consisted of students from the Arabic Language Education Study Program who experienced difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, which is a

³⁸ Krashen, "Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition."

³⁹ Zulfa Bader Eddeen, "Effectiveness of Explicit Communicative Instruction on Improving Palestinian English Majors' Grammmaring of Conditionals," *International Journal of Linguistics Literature & Translation* 5, no. 11 (2022): 134–54, <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2022.5.11.16>.

⁴⁰ J. David Creswell, W. John & Creswell, "Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches," Sage, 2018.

⁴¹ Lexy J. Moleong, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2002).

sampling technique based on specific considerations aligned with the research needs. The criteria for selecting participants included: (1) active students who had attended the Kalam course, (2) students who experienced difficulties in speaking Arabic during the learning process, and (3) students who were willing to participate as research informants. In addition to students, the lecturer teaching the Kalam course was also included as a supporting informant to obtain more comprehensive data regarding the problems encountered in Arabic speaking instruction.

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through interviews and observations involving students and the lecturer of the Kalam course. These data were used to explore information regarding the factors contributing to students' difficulties in speaking Arabic, both from linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from supporting documents such as course syllabi, learning evaluation results, books, scientific journals, and previous studies related to maharah al-kalam learning. The use of these two data sources aimed to enhance the completeness and depth of the research findings.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine the Kalam learning process, students' participation, and the obstacles that emerged during Arabic speaking activities. Semi-structured interviews were employed to obtain in-depth data while maintaining alignment with the focus of the study. The interview questions focused on students' experiences in participating in Kalam learning, the difficulties they encountered, and the factors influencing their Arabic speaking ability. Documentation was used to collect written data related to the learning process and students' learning outcomes.⁴²

Data analysis in this study employed the interactive analysis model proposed by Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña,⁴³ which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected and categorized data relevant to the research focus. Subsequently, the data were presented in descriptive narrative form to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved drawing conclusions based on patterns, themes, and relationships among the collected data. The analysis process was conducted continuously from the beginning of data collection until the completion of the study in order to produce comprehensive and systematic findings.

To ensure data validity, this study employed source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from students and the lecturer of the Kalam course. Meanwhile, technique triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, the researcher carried out member checking with the informants to ensure that the obtained data and interpretations

⁴² Dr Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif Dan R&D* (Alfabeta, 2013).

⁴³ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis. A Methods Sourcebook* (California: SAGE Publications, 2020).

accurately reflected their actual experiences and conditions. These validation techniques were implemented to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.⁴⁴

This research method was selected because it was considered appropriate for achieving the objective of the study, namely analyzing students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course in depth. By employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study was expected to generate valid and comprehensive findings capable of portraying the realities of maharah al-kalam learning more thoroughly. Furthermore, the findings were expected to serve as a basis for formulating more effective and communicative Arabic language learning strategies in higher education.

D. Research Findings and Discussion

This study found that students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course stemmed from two major categories, namely linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic factors included limited vocabulary mastery, difficulties in constructing sentences according to nahwu-sharaf rules, incorrect pronunciation of Arabic letters, and weak listening ability. Meanwhile, non-linguistic factors included low self-confidence, speaking anxiety, lack of regular practice, limited Arabic-speaking environment, and teaching methods that were not fully communicative.

Table 1. Main Findings on Students' Difficulties in Speaking Arabic

No.	Difficulty Aspect	Research Findings	Data Sources
1	Vocabulary	Students frequently paused while speaking because they forgot vocabulary items	Student and lecturer interviews
2	Speaking spontaneity	Students were more comfortable speaking with prepared texts than speaking spontaneously	Interviews and observations
3	<i>Nahwu-sharaf</i>	Students were afraid of choosing incorrect word forms and sentence structures	Student interviews
4	Pronunciation	Difficulties in pronouncing the letters ح, ع, and خ	Interviews and observations
5	Self-confidence	Students were afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at	Student and lecturer interviews
6	Language environment	Arabic was only used during classroom activities	Interviews and observations
7	Teaching methods	Memorizing dialogues was insufficient for developing spontaneous communication	Student and lecturer interviews
8	Regular practice	Speaking practice outside the	Student

⁴⁴ Yvonna S Lincoln and Egon G Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (sage, 1985).

	classroom remained very limited	interviews
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The first finding indicates that limited vocabulary mastery was the most dominant obstacle. Students stated that they often understood the meaning of conversations but struggled to find appropriate words when responding directly. One student explained, "I actually understand a little, but when I am asked to speak Arabic directly, I often forget the vocabulary." This finding was reinforced by the lecturer, who stated that students possessed basic knowledge of Arabic but frequently stopped speaking because of insufficient mufradat (vocabulary).

The second finding was related to weak spontaneous speaking ability. Students tended to depend on texts, memorized dialogues, or sentence examples provided by the lecturer. When asked to develop conversations independently, students experienced confusion. This was reflected in one informant's statement: "If it is only memorization, I can do it, but when I am asked to develop the conversation myself, I still find it difficult." Observational data also revealed that several students required considerable time to construct sentences before speaking.

The third finding showed that students experienced difficulties in applying nahwu and sharaf rules. Students were afraid of making mistakes in selecting verb forms, sentence arrangements, and grammatical structures. One informant stated, "I am often confused about determining the correct verb form or sentence structure. Therefore, when speaking, I sometimes pause for a long time because I am afraid of making grammatical mistakes." This finding indicates that grammatical mastery had not automatically transformed into oral communicative competence.

The fourth finding concerned pronunciation problems. Based on interviews and observations, several students still experienced difficulties pronouncing Arabic letters that do not exist in the Indonesian language, such as ح, ع, and خ. These pronunciation errors reduced students' confidence when speaking. This finding demonstrates that phonological aspects constitute an important component of maharah al-kalam learning.

The fifth finding revealed that psychological factors significantly influenced students' speaking abilities. Students felt embarrassed, nervous, and afraid of making mistakes when speaking Arabic in front of the class. One informant stated, "I am afraid of making pronunciation mistakes and being laughed at by my friends, so sometimes I prefer to remain silent." Observational data also showed that only a small number of students actively answered the lecturer's questions in Arabic, while the majority tended to remain passive.

The sixth finding indicated that the lack of an Arabic-speaking environment constituted a major obstacle to communicative habituation. Students stated that they rarely used Arabic outside the classroom. The lecturer also emphasized that Kalam competence could not be developed solely through classroom instruction but required a supportive environment. Therefore, the absence of bi'ah lughawiyah prevented students from becoming accustomed to using Arabic in daily communication.

The seventh finding related to teaching methods. Interview results showed that dialogue memorization alone was insufficient to help students develop

natural speaking abilities. The lecturer explained that students might memorize texts successfully but were not necessarily capable of communicating spontaneously. Students also expected Kalam learning to be more varied through discussions, language games, videos, free conversations, and real-life situation-based practice.

Table 2. Frequency of Themes Emerging from Interviews with 10 Students

Difficulty Theme	Number of Informants Mentioning	Description
Limited vocabulary mastery	3	Mentioned by informants 1, 5, and 10
Low self-confidence/anxiety	4	Mentioned by informants 1, 2, 6, and 9
Limited language environment	3	Mentioned by informants 2, 4, and 10
Difficulties in <i>nahwu-sharaf</i>	1	Mentioned by informant 3
Pronunciation difficulties	2	Mentioned by informants 6 and 9
Less varied teaching methods	2	Mentioned by informants 5 and 8
Weak listening ability (<i>istima'</i>)	1	Mentioned by informant 7

Overall, the findings indicate that students' difficulties in speaking Arabic were not caused by a single factor but rather by a combination of limited language mastery, speaking anxiety, lack of practice, limited language environment, and instructional approaches that had not fully emphasized active communication.

The findings further demonstrated that limited vocabulary mastery was the primary factor hindering students' Arabic speaking ability. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Zubaidillah and Nuruddaroini,⁴⁵ which found that university students in Kalimantan experienced difficulties in Arabic language skills, particularly due to limited speaking habituation and inadequate vocabulary mastery. In foreign language learning, vocabulary serves as the fundamental basis for communication. Without sufficient mufradat mastery, students encounter difficulties expressing ideas even when they understand basic Arabic structures.

Students' difficulties in spontaneous speaking indicated a gap between language knowledge and language use. Students may understand *nahwu* and *sharaf* theories but remain unable to apply them automatically in conversations. This finding aligns with the perspective of Brown,⁴⁶ who argued that speaking skills require the ability to process language rapidly, interactively, and

⁴⁵ Muh Haris Zubaidillah and M Ahim Sulthan Nuruddaroini, "Problematika Mahasiswa Dalam Manajemen Skill Berbahasa Arab Pada Perguruan Tinggi Di Kalimantan," *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 3 (2022): 5166–80.

⁴⁶ Brown, "Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices."

contextually. Therefore, Kalam learning should not rely solely on dialogue memorization but should instead emphasize authentic communicative practice.

The findings regarding speaking anxiety revealed that psychological aspects play a significant role in successful Arabic language learning. Students who were afraid of making mistakes tended to remain silent, avoid participation, and hesitate to speak. This finding is in line with the Affective Filter Theory proposed by Krashen,⁴⁷ which explains that anxiety, low motivation, and lack of self-confidence can hinder second language acquisition. In the context of this study, fear of making mistakes became a barrier preventing students from actively practicing Arabic.

Difficulties in pronouncing Arabic letters such as ح, ع, and خ indicate that differences between Arabic and Indonesian phonological systems also influence students' speaking abilities. These letters do not have direct equivalents in Indonesian and therefore require special articulatory practice. This finding supports Hermawan's argument that Arabic language learning should pay attention to sound systems, makhraj, and repeated pronunciation practice so that learners are able to speak accurately.⁴⁸

The lack of an Arabic-speaking environment emerged as a highly influential external factor. Students only used Arabic during the Kalam course, while outside the classroom they predominantly communicated in Indonesian. This condition demonstrates that formal instruction was not sufficiently supported by a communicative culture. Research conducted by Nulaila and Nurdiniawati also emphasized that improving maharah al-kalam requires intensive and continuous practice.⁴⁹

Teaching methods that remained heavily oriented toward memorization also became an important concern. Memorizing dialogues may help students recognize sentence patterns, but it is insufficient for developing spontaneous speaking competence. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Jumadi,⁵⁰ which emphasized that Arabic speaking instruction should employ communicative strategies enabling students to actively use Arabic in interaction. Therefore, Kalam learning should be directed toward simulations, discussions, simple debates, role plays, interviews, and contextual presentations.

Compared with previous studies, the findings of this research demonstrate both similarities and differences. This study supports the findings of Zubaidillah and Nuruddaroini,⁵¹ Nulaila and Nurdiniawati,⁵² and Prayoga,⁵³ which found that

⁴⁷ Krashen, "Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition."

⁴⁸ Acep Hermawan, *Metodologi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2014).

⁴⁹ Nurlaila Nulaila and Nurdiniawati Nurdiniawati, "Meningkatkan Kemampuan Maharah Kalam Dan Kitabah Pada Mahasiswa Prodi Pba Fakultas Tarbiyah Iai Muhammadiyah Bima," *Taroa: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (2022): 39–51.

⁵⁰ Jumadi Jumadi, "Strategi Pembelajaran Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Mahasiswa Ma'had Bilal Bin Rabah Sorong," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 2 (2022): 77–92.

⁵¹ Zubaidillah and Nuruddaroini, "Problematika Mahasiswa Dalam Manajemen Skill Berbahasa Arab Pada Perguruan Tinggi Di Kalimantan."

⁵² Nulaila and Nurdiniawati, "Meningkatkan Kemampuan Maharah Kalam Dan Kitabah Pada Mahasiswa Prodi Pba Fakultas Tarbiyah Iai Muhammadiyah Bima."

students' Arabic speaking difficulties were influenced by limited vocabulary, lack of practice, and insufficient habituation. However, this study places greater emphasis on the relationship between linguistic and psychological factors within the context of the Kalam course. Thus, this study not only explains students' difficulties but also demonstrates how these factors are interconnected.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce second language acquisition theory, which positions input, practice, motivation, and affective conditions as important factors in language learning. Practically, the findings indicate that lecturers need to design Kalam instruction that is more communicative, varied, and low-pressure. Students should be provided with safe speaking spaces where errors are not excessively emphasized during the initial stages and should be encouraged to use Arabic regularly in simple activities.

The implications of this study highlight the need to strengthen the language environment outside the classroom. Study programs may develop activities such as Arabic-speaking days, conversation clubs, Arabic debates, Arabic drama performances, simple podcasts, or daily conversations. In addition, lecturers may utilize digital media such as videos, audio recordings, and conversation applications to increase students' Arabic language exposure. This finding is consistent with Kurniati,⁵⁴ who found that social media and blended learning can support Arabic language learning, including speaking skills.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the number of student informants was limited to ten participants; therefore, the findings cannot yet be generalized broadly. Second, the study employed a qualitative approach, meaning that the obtained data were descriptive and depended heavily on the depth of interviews and observations. Third, the study did not quantitatively measure students' speaking proficiency through performance tests. Therefore, future studies are recommended to employ mixed-method approaches by incorporating speaking tests, Kalam assessment rubrics, and broader participant samples.

Based on the findings and discussion above, the initial proposition that students' difficulties in speaking Arabic are influenced by both linguistic and non-linguistic factors can be accepted. Linguistic factors were reflected in limitations related to vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structure, while non-linguistic factors were reflected in anxiety, low self-confidence, limited practice, and the absence of a supportive language environment. Therefore, Kalam learning should be directed toward an integrative approach combining language reinforcement, communicative habituation, and psychological support for students.

E. Conclusion

This study concludes that students' difficulties in speaking Arabic in the Kalam course are influenced by two major factors, namely linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic factors include limited vocabulary mastery, difficulties

⁵³ Ilham Aji Prayoga, "Kesulitan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Dan Upaya Mengatasinya Pada Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Metro Tahun Akademik 2021/2022" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri Metro, 2022).

⁵⁴ Depi Kurniati, "Penggunaan Media Sosial Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Dengan Model Blended Learning," *Ta'limij Journal Of Arabic Education And Arabic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2022): 119–38.

in applying nahwu and sharaf rules, weak pronunciation of certain Arabic letters, and low ability to construct sentences spontaneously. Meanwhile, non-linguistic factors include low self-confidence, speaking anxiety, lack of communicative practice, limited Arabic-speaking environment, and teaching methods that have not been fully communicative. Based on the results of data analysis through interviews, observations, and documentation, this study demonstrates that difficulties in speaking Arabic are not solely related to students' language competence but are also influenced by psychological conditions and insufficiently supportive learning environments. The findings reinforce second language acquisition theory, which emphasizes the importance of affective factors, communicative practice, and language environment in the mastery of speaking skills. In addition, the findings support previous studies indicating that maharah al-kalam instruction requires communicative approaches and continuous language habituation. Academically, this study contributes to the development of Arabic language learning research, particularly regarding the problems associated with maharah al-kalam in higher education. Practically, the findings may serve as evaluation material for lecturers and study programs in designing learning strategies that are more interactive, communicative, and capable of improving students' confidence in speaking Arabic. In the context of academic social and cultural environments, this study also highlights the importance of establishing bi'ah lughawiyah as a means of habituating Arabic language use within the university environment. Thus, the research objectives formulated in the introduction section have been achieved through the findings and discussion presented in this study. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations, particularly the relatively limited number of informants and the use of a descriptive qualitative approach, which means that the findings cannot yet be generalized broadly. Therefore, future studies are recommended to employ mixed-method approaches, involve larger numbers of participants, and develop technology-based or language environment-based Kalam learning models in order to expand the development and practical implementation of future research findings.

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