



## ***Maharah Kalam* Learning Strategy: Addressing Classroom Social Environment Issues and Student Demotivation**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to identify classroom social environment factors and student learning motivation as a basis for developing learning strategies to improve Arabic speaking skills (*maharah kalam*). Using a qualitative descriptive approach and conducted in a classroom for the 4th semester of the Arabic Language Education Program at the Indonesia University of Education, this study involved four students as informants. Through a qualitative descriptive approach using in-depth interviews as instruments and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, the findings indicate that peer pressure in the form of fear of judgment, as well as the teacher's direct and confrontational correction style, were found to trigger acute anxiety and severe demotivation. The accumulation of these crises and pressures even overshadowed the students' cognitive awareness of the importance of mastering Arabic speaking skills. Based on the identification of these problems, learning strategies were reconstructed through three approaches: the application of appreciative and delayed feedback, the creation of a space for error tolerance, and the adoption of creative, collaborative project-based learning. The implications of this research call for instructors who can facilitate students' ability to speak Arabic in their learning without fear or heavy mental burdens. Institutionally, the findings of this study provide a foundation for educational institutions to develop curriculum components that are sensitive to and aligned with students' psychological needs.


**Keywords:** Classroom Social Environment; Student Demotivation; Teaching Strategies; Speaking Skills.

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## Introduction

In Indonesia, Arabic is a required subject from the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah through Madrasah Aliyah levels and is taught at the university level. However, students' Arabic speaking proficiency still faces various challenges.<sup>1</sup> Students tend to feel anxious about speaking Arabic and are reluctant to use it in communication.<sup>2</sup> Phenomena frequently observed in the field include students remaining silent when asked to answer questions in Arabic, feeling anxious when required to present in front of the class, and being less active during the learning process. These conditions indicate that students' speaking skills have not developed optimally. Until now, poor speaking ability has often been attributed solely to limited vocabulary. However, there are other equally important factors, namely the classroom social environment and student demotivation, which have a significant influence but have not received adequate attention.

The teaching of Arabic speaking skills continues to evolve through various pedagogical approaches aimed at addressing a range of linguistic and non-linguistic challenges. Research by Sa'diyah et al. found that learners often face psychological barriers, such as nervousness when speaking and boredom resulting from overly monotonous teaching methods.<sup>3</sup> Previous research trends indicate that efforts to improve Arabic speaking skills have largely focused on innovative strategies and environmental conditioning.<sup>4</sup> A study conducted by Jufrih et al. demonstrated that the implementation of teaching strategies by instructors, such as the play-based learning method, is effective in capturing students' attention and facilitating their communication.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, Marlius et al. found that creating a language-supportive environment through the provision of supportive facilities and institutional policies is a crucial step in fostering Arabic language habits.<sup>6</sup> From a psychosocial perspective, Kurniawan

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<sup>1</sup> Zurqoni Zurqoni et al., "Has Arabic Language Learning Been Successfully Implemented?," *International Journal of Instruction* 13, no. 4 (2020): 715–30, <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.13444a>.

<sup>2</sup> Intiha Bima Tafriha and Maslamah, "Hubungan Kesiapan Berkomunikasi Dengan Kecemasan Berbicara Bahasa Arab," *Dirasab: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Dan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2026): 268–79.

<sup>3</sup> Khalimatus Sa'diyah et al., "Maharah Kalam And It's Problem," (*الطموحات*) *EL-THUMUHAT* 6, no. 1 (2023): 14–20, <https://doi.org/10.25299/elthumuhat.v6i1.13076>.

<sup>4</sup> Syaiful Bahri Tanjung Hapizil Umam, "Fa'aliah Istikhdam Uslub At Ta'allum Al Qoim Ala Al Masyru'at Litarqiyah Maharah Al Kalam At Tollab," *Al-Himam: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Pendidikan & Bahasa Arab* 4, no. 1 (2024): 41–53, <https://doi.org/10.51590/alhimam.v4i1.869>.

<sup>5</sup> Dian Ahmad Jufrih et al., "TEACHER'S ATTEMPT IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' MAHAROH KALAM: STRATEGIES, PROGRAMS, AND ITS PROBLEMS," *Primary: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar* 12, no. 1 (2023): 90, <https://doi.org/10.33578/jpkip.v12i1.9272>.

<sup>6</sup> Yoni Marlius et al., "The Efforts to Improve Students' Arabic Speaking Skills Through Language Environment Activation: A Study of Phenomenology," *Al-Ta'rib: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab LAIN Palangka Raya* 9, no. 1 (2021): 35–48, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v9i1.2585>.

et al. emphasize that the students' environment has a highly significant impact on the development of enthusiasm and learning motivation.<sup>7</sup> This aligns with the empirical findings of Rohanah et al., which demonstrate that direct social interaction has a positive and significant influence on enhancing students' learning activities in the classroom.<sup>8</sup>

Various studies have examined the importance of learning strategies, environmental conditioning, social interaction, and student motivation in isolation, such as the study on environmental conditioning by Marlius et al. (2021) and the analysis of teaching strategies by Jufrih et al. (2023), both of which were mentioned earlier.<sup>9</sup> However, there remains a significant research gap. To date, very few studies have examined the humanistic-psychological aspects in an integrated manner, particularly those that position classroom social interaction problems and student demotivation as the primary variables causing learning difficulties. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its approach, which uses the findings from the identification of classroom social environment issues and student demotivation as the foundation for developing learning strategies.

The actual state of speaking skills (*maharah kalam*) among Arabic Language Education students at the Indonesia University of Education indicates that most students are not yet able to speak fluently, as their oral practice often stalls and is limited to passive vocabulary knowledge. This weakness in language proficiency stems from a limited vocabulary (*mufradat*), a reluctance to express oneself, and acute anxiety caused by peer pressure, which triggers fear of judgment and ridicule for language mistakes. This situation is further exacerbated by interaction patterns with instructors who sometimes employ direct, confrontational corrections or random calling on students, thereby demanding a high degree of spontaneity in front of the class and creating additional pressure for students. This phenomenon leads to a strong conclusion that mastery of *maharah kalam* cannot be separated from the dynamics of the classroom's social environment and students' motivation to learn. When the classroom ecosystem fails to provide psychological safety, students' affective filters increase drastically.

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<sup>7</sup> Feby Kurniawan et al., "The Influence of Students' Environment on Students' Learning Motivation," *JOURNAL OF DIGITAL LEARNING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION* 1, no. 8 (2023): 297–305, <https://doi.org/10.56778/jdlde.v1i8.58>.

<sup>8</sup> Lia Rohanah et al., "PENGARUH INTERAKSI SOSIAL TERHADAP AKTIVITAS BELAJAR PESERTA DIDIK," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran Guru Sekolah Dasar (JPPGuseda)* 3, no. 2 (2020): 139, <https://doi.org/10.55215/jppguseda.v3i2.3011>.

<sup>9</sup> Marlius et al., "The Efforts to Improve Students' Arabic Speaking Skills Through Language Environment Activation"; Jufrih et al., "TEACHER'S ATTEMPT IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' MAHAROH KALAM."

As a result, students' high cognitive awareness of the urgency of Arabic for their future career prospects is ultimately overshadowed by daily demotivation triggered by mental strain and social anxiety in the classroom.

This study aims to identify factors related to the classroom social environment and student learning motivation in order to develop effective learning strategies to improve Arabic speaking skills. The urgency of this study lies in the pressing need to shift the *mabarab kalam* learning paradigm from one that is merely oriented toward the transfer of linguistic material to a learning approach that is responsive to the psychological and social conditions of the students. By comprehensively mapping and understanding the issues within the classroom social environment as well as the root causes of student demotivation in the classroom, instructors and policymakers can design targeted teaching interventions, thereby making the Arabic language acquisition process more supportive, meaningful, and capable of optimally equipping students with communication skills.

This study was conducted using a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to comprehensively achieve the research objectives. The choice of a qualitative approach was based on its characteristic of requiring the authentic experiences of the informants, whereby the researcher seeks to understand empirical reality through the informants' subjective perspectives.<sup>10</sup> Based on this premise, this study explores the phenomena of demotivation and classroom social environment issues in their entirety by using four active fourth-semester students from the same class in the Arabic Language Education Program at the Indonesia University of Education as its primary data sources. Informants were selected using purposive sampling with specific criteria: students who appeared passive in speaking skill instruction and who openly exhibited signs of demotivation and anxiety when interacting in Arabic in class.

To collect credible data from informants, the data collection technique used was in-depth interviews guided by a semi-structured interview instrument. This instrument was designed to be reflective and contextual so that the researcher could capture social reality and students' subjective experiences in a comprehensive and meaningful way.<sup>11</sup> The interviews were conducted in a single, lengthy, and in-depth dialogue session with each informant, followed

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<sup>10</sup> Yoki Yusanto, "Ragam Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif," *JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION (JSC)* 1, no. 1 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.31506/jsc.v1i1.7764>.

<sup>11</sup> Khoirur Rozikin et al., "TEKNIK PENGUMPULAN DATA PENELITIAN DAN PENYUSUNAN INSTRUMEN PENELITIAN KUALITATIF," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Dan Humaniora* 5, no. 2 (2026): 1612–29.

by a member-checking session to further explore the findings. Based on the results of participatory observation and a pre-interview approach, the researcher selected four students as primary informants based on the principle of data saturation. During the interview session with the fourth informant, the researcher observed redundancy in the information (repetition of patterns of psychological experiences) from the previous three informants; thus, data collection was deemed to have reached saturation and was terminated. After the narratives from the interviews were collected, the data were analyzed by the researcher using the theory proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Operationally, this qualitative data analysis process included the stages of data reduction to select relevant core information, the presentation of data in the form of structured narratives, and the drawing of conclusions.

## Result and Discussion

Based on the interviews conducted by the researcher with the informants, the research findings are summarized in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1. Interview Results and Interpretation

Focus Variables	List of Questions	Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Interpretation
Classroom Social Environment (Peer Interaction)	“How do you feel when you're asked to speak Arabic in front of your classmates?”	<i>Pasti pertama agak ragu, takut salah. Tapi keduanya tuh merasa lebih bebas lah, karena bisa mencoba berbicara di depan gitu.</i> [“I'm sure the first one was a little hesitant, afraid of making a mistake. But the second one felt more at ease, since they got to try speaking in front of everyone like that.”]	<i>Kalau ngomong di depan kelas Bahasa Arab ini, kadang agak kurang percaya diri, nggak yakin kalau itu benar gitu.</i> [“When I speak in front of this Arabic class, I sometimes feel a little lacking in confidence. I'm not sure if what I'm saying is correct.”]	<i>“Malu, karena kan banyak yang udah bisa lah. Ngerasa takut salah, takut di-judge sama yang lain.</i> [“I feel embarrassed, because so many people can already do it. I'm afraid of making mistakes and afraid of being judged by others.”]	<i>Deg-degan banget, karena aku kurang dalam ini loh. Aku tuh masih kurang.</i> [“I'm really nervous because I'm not very good at this, my vocabulary is still pretty limited”]	In general, students experience negative emotional responses such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and feelings of intimidation when asked to speak Arabic in front of the class. The main factors contributing to this situation are limited vocabulary and the tendency to compare themselves to more proficient peers. However, there is a mixed set of feelings, as some students also see an opportunity to try speaking even in situations that are not entirely ideal.
	“Have you ever been afraid of	<i>Takut salah tuh pasti karena kita sebagai pemula. Kalau</i>	<i>Takut salah, takut di-judge, terus diingetin sama orang itu</i>	<i>Biasanya kalo kita salah ngomong itu pada ketawa</i>	<i>Iya, ya seringnya gitu sih. Jadi kayak mau mencoba juga, kayak</i>	All informants indicated significant

	<p>making a mistake because you were worried your friends would laugh at you or judge you? Can you share your experience?"</p>	<p><i>pendengarnya teman-teman sekelas, kemungkinan besar ya takut diketawain, takut dijudge. Untuk penugasan atau misalkan kayak wajib maju ke depan, itu pasti ya.</i>          ["The fear of making a mistake definitely comes from being a beginner. If the audience is your classmates, you're most likely afraid of being laughed at or judged. For assignments or, say, when you're required to go up to the front of the class, that's definitely the case"]</p>	<p><i>berkepanjangan. Diingat lagi, diingat lagi gitu.</i>          ["Afraid of making a mistake, afraid of being judged, and then having that person keep bringing it up over and over again. Bringing it up again and again, like that."]</p>	<p>["Usually, when we say something wrong, everyone just laughs"]</p>	<p><i>harus mikirin dulu, ini tuh bakalan kehati-gak sih sama orang. Gak pede, belum pede.</i>          ["Yeah, that's usually how it goes. So, even when I want to give it a try, I have to think about it first, like, will this actually work out with the other person? I'm not confident yet."]</p>	<p>experiences of social anxiety, particularly regarding the possibility of being mocked, laughed at, or having their mistakes remembered by peers. This indicates the presence of social pressure within the classroom environment that has the potential to hinder students' courage to speak.</p>
	<p>"In your opinion, does our class have a supportive atmosphere for learning to speak, or does it actually make us feel insecure?"</p>	<p><i>Ada motivasi kecil loh, motivasi kecil untuk kayak gimana ya biar bisa jadi kayak dia. Yang besarnya tuh kayak lebih ke merasa keinggalan, karena kita sama-sama di sini tapi kok dia udah bisa duluan.</i>          ["There's a little bit of motivation, you know, a little motivation to figure out how I can be like him. The bigger part of it is more about feeling left behind, because we're both here, but somehow he's already gotten ahead of me."].</p>	<p><i>Aku insecure. Terus ngelihat orang yang udah bisa berbicara itu jadi makin insecure, jadi kayak ah, kok bukan apa-apa dibandingkan tau gitu kan lo.</i>          ["I'm insecure. And seeing people who can already speak makes me even more insecure, it's like, "Ugh, I'm such a nobody compared to you, who already knows all that, right?"]</p>	<p><i>Ngajak untuk ngomong berbahasa Arab tuh masih kurang. Tapi ketika itu udah disuruh dosen, dan temen-temen tuh bakal ngedukung gitu. Apa pun yang kita omong, walaupun salah.</i>          ["Just encouraging people to speak Arabic isn't enough. But when the lecturer tells us to, our friends will support us, no matter what we say, even if we make mistakes."]</p>	<p><i>Dari pembiasaannya kan kita belum terbiasa ya ngomong bahasa Arab di kelas itu. Aku tuh di kelas belum menemui ruang aman buat ngomong bahasa Arab.</i>          ["Since it's still new to us, we're not used to speaking Arabic in class yet, right? I haven't found a safe space in class to speak Arabic yet."]</p>	<p>The classroom environment exhibits a gray area (a condition where no single factor dominates), characterized by a combination of social support and psychological pressure. On the one hand, students feel motivated by more proficient peers; on the other hand, this also gives rise to feelings of insecurity and inferiority. Support from peers tends to emerge in formal contexts (e.g., when assigned by the instructor), but has not yet been internalized in daily classroom interactions.</p>
<p><b>Classroom Social Environment (Interactions with Instructors)</b></p>	<p>"How do you think our lecturer responds when a student makes a mistake or has messy grammar while speaking?"</p>	<p><i>Bikin gimana kita itu gak ngerasa salah dan gak boleh ngulang lagi. Pertama gak malu-maluin di depan orang.</i>  <i>Lebih ke gimana biar murid ini tahu dia salah, tapi gak mempermalukan di depan temen-temen yang lain, kayak gitu.</i></p>	<p><i>Kayak suka aja gitu kalau dikoreksi sama dosen.</i>          ["It's like I actually enjoy it when my lecturer corrects my work"].</p>	<p><i>Biasanya dikoreksinya pas ujian yang ngomong satu-satu itu. Jadi pas lah rasanya kayak gitu.</i>          ["Usually, the corrections are made during the exam, where students answer one by one. So it feels just right that way."].</p>	<p><i>Paling direkomendasiin gitu. Banyak dengerin podcast, banyakin dengerin kayak lagu atau apa yang berhubungan dengan bahasa Arab kayak gitu.</i>          ["That's the top recommendation. Listen to lots of</p>	<p>In general, lecturers are perceived as having a relatively constructive corrective approach, meaning they provide feedback without humiliating</p>

		<p>["We need to make sure they don't feel like they've done anything wrong and that they shouldn't do it again. First, we shouldn't embarrass them in front of others. It's more about making sure the student realizes they're wrong, but without humiliating them in front of their classmates, something like that."].</p>			<p>podcasts, and listen to lots of songs or other content related to the Arabic language."].</p>	<p>students. Some informants noted that lecturers also offer recommendations for additional learning. However, there is variation in experiences, particularly regarding the timing and method of corrections, which are sometimes conducted directly in front of the class, potentially causing stress for some students.</p>
<p>"Does the way the lecturer corrects mistakes help you understand better, or does it make you feel discouraged and afraid to try again?"</p>	<p><i>Buat aku sendiri, itu dapat memperbaiki diri sih. Kayak ke depannya tuh agak nggak takut buat ngomong, karena tahu kalau nantipun salah bakal dibenerin.</i>          ["For me personally, it helps me improve myself. Like, in the future, I won't be as afraid to speak up, because I know that even if I make a mistake, it'll be corrected."]</p>	<p><i>Jadi kita tuh tahu lebih benarnya tuh gimana.</i>          ["So we actually know what it's really like"].</p>	<p><i>Itu makin paham sib. Terkadang kalau kita pas lagi ngomong di depan langsung ditegur kayak gitu, kita jadinya bukan nambab tahu apa yang diomonginya, malah jadi takut untuk ngomong selanjutnya gitu. Malah malu nantinya.</i>          ["I do understand that better now. But if we're speaking in front of others and get corrected like that right away, instead of learning more about what's being discussed, we end up being afraid to speak up again. We'll just end up feeling embarrassed."]</p>	<p><i>Kalau aku mah malah lebih termotivasi.</i>          ["As for me, I'm actually even more motivated."]</p>	<p>The majority of students feel that corrections from lecturers have a positive impact in the form of improved understanding and motivation to improve themselves. However, there are indications that corrections made in person can cause discomfort, thereby actually hindering the courage to try again. This highlights the importance of correction strategies that are sensitive to students' circumstances.</p>	
<p>"Have you ever felt stressed by the lecturers' teaching style in the Kalam class?"</p>	<p><i>Nggak, kita tuh pasti banyak salahnya, tapi ketika salah, itu tuh dikasih tahu salahnya di sini, dibenerin, dan nggak dipertontonkan kesalahan kita di depan orang lain.</i>          ["No, we definitely make a lot of mistakes, but when we do, we're told what we did wrong right here, we fix it, and our mistakes aren't paraded in front of others"].</p>	<p><i>Kalau aku mah kayak gugup gitu, takut kalau maharobnya di depan gitu. Kalau kita ngomong di depan, semua orang tuh pada yakin gitu. Itu yang bikin tertekan buat ngomongnya.</i>          ["Personally, I get kind of nervous, I'm afraid of speaking in front of everyone like that. When we speak in front of others, everyone just assumes we know</p>	<p><i>Ngerasa tertekan. Karena biasanya dosennya suka nunjuk-nunjuk random gitu.</i>          ["I feel stressed. Because the lecturer usually points at people at random like that."]</p>	<p><i>Sering. Terutama yang kita kuliah sama dosen orang Arab itu, jadi kayak shock gitu loh, disuruh ngomong tiba-tiba tuh sampai kayak, iya gak mau gak mau.</i>          ["All the time. Especially when we had classes with that Arab lecturer. It was kind of a shock to be told to speak out of the blue, to the point where, well, you just had to do it</p>	<p>The students' responses revealed a range of experiences. Some students did not feel pressured due to the lecturers' supportive approach, while others experienced stress as a result of certain teaching methods, such as random calling on students and the requirement</p>	

			what we're talking about, and that's what makes it so stressful to speak.”].		whether you wanted to or not.”].	to speak spontaneously, especially when lecturers used Arabic exclusively. This indicates that teaching strategies have not yet been fully adapted to the students' readiness.
<b>Learning Motivation (Internal Demotivating Factors)</b>	“I've noticed you rarely speak up in the Kalam class. What's the main reason you feel unmotivated or reluctant?”	<i>Nggak tahu jawabannya. Nggak tahu cara nyampeinnya.</i> [“I don't know the answer. I don't know how to say it.”]	<i>Aku udah ngomong bahasa Arab gitu. Itu tuh yang takut ada salah apa gitu.</i> [“I've spoken Arabic like that before. I'm just afraid I might make a mistake or something.”]	<i>Pertama, malu untuk mencoba. Yang kedua tuh takut salah juga. Takut di-judge sama yang lainnya. Sebenarnya, kulan bagi aku, itu salah satu motivasi buat apabila ada soal selanjutnya, pengennya aku yang jawab gitu.</i> [“First, I'm too shy to try. Second, I'm afraid of getting it wrong. I'm afraid of being judged by others. Actually, for me, that's one of the things that motivates me, when the next question comes up, I want to be the one to answer it.”].	<i>Pertama, karena gak ada temen, terus kedua, karena ya dari diri akunya juga sih kurang kosakata, terus kurang ngebiasain. Aku tuh lebih termotivasi kalau misalkan di kelas tuh banyak yang ngomong bahasa Arab.</i> [“First, because I don't have any friends, and second, because, well, I don't have a large enough vocabulary, and I'm not used to speaking it. I'm more motivated when there are a lot of people speaking Arabic in class.”]	The primary factors causing low participation are internal barriers, such as the inability to organize vocabulary into response sentences, limited vocabulary, shyness, and fear of evaluation by peers or the instructor. Additionally, a lack of speaking practice and a lack of a supportive environment further reinforce students' tendency to struggle with participation.
	“What makes you feel less confident compared to your classmates during this lesson?”	<i>Kayaknya kebanyakan tuh karena melihat teman-teman yang udah mahir. Jadi kayak kita merasa, mungkin merasa ketinggalan.</i> [“I think it's mostly because we see our friends who are already good at it. So it's like we feel, maybe we feel like we're falling behind.”].	<i>Aku tuh gak pernah mencoba. Gak pernah kayak yang lain.</i> [“I've never even tried. I've never been like the others.”].	<i>Teman kita ngejawab duluan.</i> [“Our friend answered first.”]	<i>Aku mah lebih ke kosakata sih, yang bikin aku nggak pede karena kosakata aku dikit.</i> [“I'm more into vocabulary, actually, that's what makes me feel insecure because my vocabulary is limited”].	Low self-confidence is influenced by comparing oneself to peers perceived as more proficient, a lack of practical experience, and limited vocabulary mastery. This indicates that students' confidence in speaking Arabic remains low and is significantly influenced by both internal and external factors.
	“Is there a specific moment in class that makes your motivation to learn Arabic plummet?”	<i>Nggak ada sih.</i> [“Not really”]	<i>Nggak ada.</i> [“None”]	<i>Nggak ada.</i> [“None”]	<i>Nggak ada sih.</i> [“Not really”].	All informants stated that there was no specific moment that drastically reduced their motivation. This indicates that the demotivation experienced was

						largely influenced by gradual and structural factors; it was not the result of a single event.
<b>Learning Motivation (Relevance and Workload)</b>	<p>"In your personal opinion, is being able to speak Arabic important for your future? Why?"</p>	<p><i>Menurutku penting, karena kita emang sebenarnya basic itu lebih ke pendidikan ya, di prodi kita ini, jadi mungkin kita harus mahir dalam takalum yang dasar. Alasannya karena, ketika nanti kita turun ke dunia kerja.</i>  ["I think it's important because, in our program, the foundation really lies in education, so we probably need to be proficient in the basics of takalum. The reason is that when we eventually enter the workforce.</p>	<p><i>Penting sih, kita kan apalagi jurusan bangsa Arab pasti orang kelibatan ya tabu kita bangsa Arab punya kemampuan itu. Apalagi dalam dunia kerja kan kayak kok lulusan ini begini.</i>  ["It's important, though, especially for us in the Arab Studies program, people can tell that we, as Arabs, have those abilities. Especially in the workplace, where people might think, "Why are these graduates like this?"]</p>	<p><i>Sebagai anak pendidikan bahasa Arab, ya, ke depannya kan salah satu tujuannya bakal jadi pendidik. Minimalnya sih bisa tabu dasar-dasarnya lab.</i>  ["As a student of Arabic, one of my future goals is to become a teacher. At the very least, I want to know the basics."].</p>	<p><i>Penting tau, misalkan kita nggak bisa bahasa Arab, sedangkan kita kuliah di PBA gitu. Terus mikirin prospek kerja juga, kan.</i>  ["It's important to know, let's say we don't speak Arabic, but we're studying in the Arabic Language Program. Then we have to think about our job prospects, too, right?"]</p>	<p>All students held a positive perception regarding the relevance of Arabic speaking skills to their future, particularly in relation to career prospects as Arabic language educators. This suggests that cognitively, students are aware of the importance of speaking proficiency, although affectively, they still face various obstacles.</p>
	<p>"Do you feel that this Kalam material is too difficult for you? Which part confuses you the most?"</p>	<p><i>Miskin dalam mufrodat. Kekurangan kita dalam mufrodat itu, yang bikin terhambat dalam takalum.</i></p>	<p><i>Berat kalam misalkan harus maju ke depan itu menurut aku yang bikin pusing, bikin kepikiran.</i></p>	<p><i>Pertama tuh ya pasti mufrodat. Mungkin kan di kelas tuh kayak babasanya nggak bahasa-bahasa sehari-hari lagi yang dipakai.</i></p>	<p><i>Kayak ininya sih, di kalimat-kalimat. Iya, menyusun kata-katanya itu loh.</i></p>	<p>Students identified several key areas of difficulty, namely limited vocabulary (<i>Mufrodat</i>), difficulty in constructing sentences, and the pressure of having to speak in front of the class.</p>
<b>Basis for Strategy Development</b>	<p>"If you could choose, what would the ideal <i>maharab kalam</i> classroom atmosphere look like, one that makes you feel confident speaking?"</p>	<p><i>Ketika semuanya memiliki bagian untuk berbicara, dan tidak disalahkan oleh sebagian yang lainnya.</i>  ["When everyone has a say, and no one is blamed by the others"].</p>	<p><i>Ngomong bahasa Arab walaupun kayak masih campur bahasa Indonesia sambil research, kalau nggak tahu gitu, terus kalau misalkan ada yang ngomong bahasa Indonesia, biar kan aja dia ngomong, jangan di— ini mah harus gini— nanti itu mah diakhirin.</i>  ["Speak Arabic, even if it's still mixed with Indonesian, while you're doing your research. If you don't know something, just keep going. And if, for example, someone speaks Indonesian, just let</p>	<p><i>Kalau yang lebih menariknya tuh, kayak setiap orang tuh punya mufrodatnya baru gitu loh. Mufrodat baru yang kira-kira bisa dibawakan untuk dibawa jadi topik ngomong gitu.</i>  ["What's even more interesting is that it's like everyone has their own new vocabulary, you know? New vocabulary that can be used as conversation topics."]</p>	<p><i>Dibiasain di kelas gitu biar pede meskipun kita masih ada salah-salahnya.</i>  ["We get used to it in class so we can feel confident even though we still make mistakes"].</p>	<p>Students hope for a classroom environment that is understanding of all levels of proficiency, supportive, and non-judgmental, where everyone has the opportunity to speak without fear of being criticized. Additionally, flexibility in language use (such as mixing languages) and gradually getting used to speaking are important aspects of developing speaking skills.</p>

			them talk, don't say, "This has to be done this way," or "That needs to be finished."].			
“What advice would you give the lecturer? How should they handle it when a student makes a mistake so the student doesn't feel embarrassed?”	<i>Pertama pasti diapresiasi dong. Habis itu, boleh dikasih tahu yang kurang tepatnya. Jadi diimprove sama dosennya, tidak langsung menyalahkan.</i> [“First, of course, it should be acknowledged. After that, it's okay to point out what's not quite right. That way, the lecturer can help improve it, rather than immediately assigning blame.”].	<i>Diapresiasi dulu. Habisin dulu dia ngomongnya gitu kita satunya bagian ini dan selain ngasih tahu kita salahnya di mana.</i> [“Let's appreciate him first. Let him finish speaking, he'll say something like, “We're all part of this,” and then he'll point out where we went wrong.”]	<i>Kalan bagusnya sih lebih baik tetap muka langsung ya.</i> [“Ideally, it's better to meet in person”].	<i>Kalau menurut aku, langsung ke rekomendasi.</i> [“If you ask me, just go straight to the recommendations.”].	Students emphasize the importance of an appreciative approach to correction, which involves offering praise first before addressing mistakes. Furthermore, corrections are preferred to be delivered indirectly or in a more personal manner to avoid causing discomfort.	
“In your opinion, what kind of classroom activities are fun and can help us all speak Arabic without feeling self-conscious?”	<i>Ketika kita bisa berbicara bahasa Arab seadanya dan lawan bicara kita itu memahami, tanpa menjudge.</i> [“When we can speak Arabic as best we can, and the person we're talking to understands us without judging us.”]	<i>Bikin konten tapi kayaknya ada lah yang bikin konten bahasa arab gitu.</i> [“I'm creating content, but I think there are people out there who create content in Arabic, too.”]	<i>Ngomongnya tuh dari sesuatu yang baru gitu. Kayak yang benar-benar asing di telinga kita, bahasa Arabnya kan kosakata yang asing di sehari-hari kita, kalau misalnya kira-kira nggak bisa ngomong ya lihat di Google gitu gimana bahasa Arabnya apa gitu.</i> [“It's about something new, you know. Like Arabic words that sound completely foreign to us, words we don't use in our daily lives. If, for example, you can't figure out how to say something, just look it up on Google to see what the Arabic equivalent is.”]	<i>Kayak bikin video gitu sih. Kayak sama temen, tapi sama temen kayak nge-vlog bareng gitu kan.</i> [“It's kind of like making a video. Like with a friend, but with a friend, like vlogging together, you know?”].	Students tend to prefer learning activities that are creative, collaborative, and contextual, such as content creation, vlogging, or exploring new vocabulary through digital media. Activities that do not emphasize evaluation and allow for free exploration are considered more effective in improving speaking skills.	

The interview findings presented in Table 1 indicate that there are significant influences from the classroom social environment and students' lack of motivation to learn on their ability to improve their Arabic speaking skills. This suggests that these two factors pose challenges for students in enhancing their speaking skills. Regarding the classroom environment, students predominantly expressed ambivalence, noting that interactions with peers or instructors can sometimes boost motivation to speak but can also have the opposite effect. As for learning motivation, students tended to lack confidence and acknowledged that a limited vocabulary contributes to their demotivation in speaking Arabic. Students also shared their perceptions of the classroom atmosphere and the teaching strategies they found effective and preferred for improving speaking skills.

The classroom social environment is an external factor related to social relationships among students and between students and instructors, and the atmosphere shaped by these relationships.<sup>12</sup> This environment plays a crucial role in supporting improvements in students' learning outcomes. In this context, improvements in Arabic speaking skills are directly influenced by the classroom social environment. Keumalawati (2023), in her research, emphasized that the social environment involves not only the presence of people in the classroom but also the quality of relationships and the dynamics of interactions that influence students' skills and academic performance.<sup>13</sup> Based on the findings of this study, students perceived the social environment as having a predominantly negative influence. Students felt anxious when required to speak Arabic in front of their peers who were already more proficient in the language. The anxiety felt by students directly affects their Arabic speaking skills. The fear of being mocked, laughed at, or judged by their peers leads to a reluctance to practice speaking Arabic. This emotional turmoil acts as a filter that hinders students' active engagement in interacting in Arabic. This indicates that the emotional atmosphere in the classroom is not yet fully conducive, even though a conducive classroom environment should serve as a psychological determinant influencing the success of learning improvement. This study highlights a new finding that differs from previous research the disparity in proficiency among students in the same classroom radically and directly activates a negative affective filter that paralyzes oral practice.

Social interactions among peers in the classroom are often a significant source of psychological stress for college students. Field findings reinforce this, as all interviewees expressed a deep fear of negative evaluation or judgment from their peers. Students feel embarrassed and lack self-confidence because they tend to compare their abilities with those of peers they consider more proficient, and they worry that their pronunciation mistakes will be constantly remembered by their classmates. Research conducted by Maher & King (2020) reveals that social interaction requires a safe environment and a sense of security, free from feelings of threat, yet the findings of this study indicate that students actually feel a burden of temporary social trauma emerging, where the social risks they avoid are not merely momentary embarrassment but a long-term fear that their verbal mistakes will be

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<sup>12</sup> Salsabilunnisa et al., "Pengaruh Lingkungan Kelas Terhadap Hasil Belajar Bahasa Arab Siswa Kelas VIII MTsS Miftahussalam Karawaci," *INTIFA: Journal of Education and Language* 1, no. 4 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.62083/intifa.v1i4.192>.

<sup>13</sup> Cut Keumalawati, "مشكلات الطلاب في قسم تعليم اللغة العربية في مهارة الكلام," *Jurnal Seumubenet* 2, no. 2 (2023): 179–95, <https://doi.org/10.63732/jsmbt.v2i2.177>.

remembered, thereby becoming a barrier that leads students to prefer a passive stance to avoid social risks in the classroom.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to dynamics with peers, interactions between educators (lecturers) and students also influence psychological stress in the practice of *mabarab kalam*. Based on in-depth interviews, students often feel stressed and shocked when lecturers provide direct correction in front of the entire class while they are attempting to speak. The demand to construct sentences spontaneously, coupled with limited vocabulary, significantly increases the cognitive load and directly affects students' emotional state. Although the instructor intends to correct linguistic rules, a confrontational approach to correction without any accompanying appreciation actually creates new anxiety. This phenomenon aligns with previous research confirming that, in addition to the classroom environment, the educator's approach is one of the primary factors contributing to students' reluctance in language skill learning.<sup>15</sup> However, the findings of this study expand the scope of that theory by showing that the root of the problem lies not in the existence of the instructor but in a specific instructional pattern, namely, random selection combined with immediate correction, which instantly undermines students' confidence.

The social pressures arising from the classroom environment eventually accumulate and develop into an internal motivation crisis or demotivation among students. The demotivation experienced by the informants in this study did not arise suddenly but was the result of a sense of discomfort in learning. The findings indicate that students lose their self-confidence and feel incapable because they constantly compare their abilities to those of classmates perceived as far more proficient. The accumulation of self-doubt and fear of judgment led them to consciously choose to remain passive in Arabic. In fact, student motivation and engagement in the classroom depend heavily on the creation of a supportive classroom environment and adaptive teaching strategies from educators.<sup>16</sup> This study highlights a procedural aspect of fieldwork: that students' withdrawal into passivity serves as a logical

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<sup>14</sup> Kate Maher and Jim King, "Language Anxiety and Learner Silence in the Classroom from a Cognitive-Behavioral Perspective," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 43 (March 2023): 105–11, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190523000077>.

<sup>15</sup> Afidatul Husniyah, "Investigating Demotivational Factors in Indonesian EFL Classrooms: The Case of Madrasa Students," *Studies in English Language and Education* 6, no. 1 (2019): 44–60, <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v6i1.12210>.

<sup>16</sup> Ridho Muamar Irsad et al., "Interaksi Edukatif Dan Pengelolaan Kelas Yang Efektif Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Kalimatuna: Journal of Arabic Research* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.15408/kjar.v3i1.40148>.

defense mechanism resulting from the absence of an emotionally safe classroom environment.

Behind the obstacles arising from social interactions and demotivation lies a paradox: students remain highly aware of the importance of mastering Arabic speaking skills. The findings indicate that, overall, students recognize that mastery of *maharah kalam* is a vital competency directly linked to their career success and job prospects as future educators. However, the research findings also reveal that this high level of awareness and motivation regarding career prospects is largely overshadowed by obstacles such as a lack of self-confidence and frustration stemming from a limited vocabulary, despite the necessity to string words together effectively in order to speak well. The significant influence of the classroom's social environment and the prevailing demotivation cannot be overcome by an awareness of the long-term benefits to be gained. This underscores that awareness of future benefits alone is insufficient to ensure fluency in speaking unless supported by strong motivation and a classroom ecosystem that fosters students' linguistic development. This is where the fundamental contrast of this study lies with the common assumption that future instrumental motivation is a powerful driving force; the actual context of this study's findings reveals an ironic reality, in which that future idealism proves completely paralyzed when faced with the threat of social anxiety in the classroom.

Given the identification of these core issues, learning strategies must be maximized to address them. Learning strategies can serve as efforts to enhance speaking proficiency. Adaptive learning that considers classroom social environment factors and student motivation is the primary focus as a fundamental first step to overcome existing barriers. Through more targeted strategies, the classroom atmosphere created will be more supportive and inclusive, thereby fostering a sense of safety for students as they improve their speaking skills.<sup>17</sup> Issues identified based on the findings of this study, such as fear of judgment, limited vocabulary, and a loss of motivation in speaking Arabic, must be considered primary variables in designing learning strategies to improve speaking skills. Consequently, the resulting learning process will yield outcomes: not only technical improvements in speaking skills but also sustained interventions to address demotivation and declining self-confidence.

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<sup>17</sup> Barid Syamsiyah Barid et al., "Developing an Arabic Language Environment to Improve Arabic Speaking Skills in Islamic Junior High School Students: Pengembangan Bi'ah Lughawiyah Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Pada Siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam," *ATHLA: Journal of Arabic Teaching, Linguistic and Literature* 6, no. 1 (2025): 86–102, <https://doi.org/10.22515/athla.v6i1.11213>.

The findings suggest that students should be given the space to develop their speaking skills, accompanied by adequate support. In light of this, the learning strategy to be implemented focuses on reformulating the methods by which instructors provide feedback. Feedback is designed to prioritize appreciative and delayed correction. Operationally, this strategy is executed through a non-intervention phase, in which instructors consciously give students space to optimize their abilities and complete their statements in full without interruption mid-sentence, in line with the findings from the interview with Informant 2, who requested that instructors let them “finish speaking first.” After students finish speaking, the evaluation phase must begin with the expression of affective appreciation for the courage and effort demonstrated, in order to prevent a loss of confidence or feelings of embarrassment (insecurity). As for corrections related to linguistic rules, these are implemented through a deferred correction scheme, meaning they are summarized for collective discussion at the end of the class or conveyed personally after class without making the students feel cornered. These findings align with studies emphasizing that the timing and substance of feedback significantly influence students’ cognitive achievement and acceptance.<sup>18</sup> Feedback tailored to emotional needs is considered more effective and constructive for future learning processes compared to corrections provided directly.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, the strategy implemented must incorporate error tolerance. This aligns with a respondent’s statement that limited vocabulary is a reason for reluctance to speak. For example, instructors allow students to switch between Indonesian and Arabic (code-switching) when they hit a roadblock while speaking Arabic during a conversation. The researcher acknowledges the academic debate regarding the effectiveness of code-switching in language acquisition, as there is a common view that mixing languages can hinder the acquisition process as a whole. However, referring to the “Affective Filter Hypothesis” by Stephen Krashen and the “Translanguaging paradigm” by Ofelia Garcia & Li Wei, a total ban on the use of the mother tongue in situations of acute anxiety and vocabulary blockages will actually create psychological barriers that completely stifle students’ confidence.<sup>20</sup> In the

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<sup>18</sup> Sayipujamali Taxipulati and Hai-Dong Lu, “The Influence of Feedback Content and Feedback Time on Multimedia Learning Achievement of College Students and Its Mechanism,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (December 2021), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.706821>.

<sup>19</sup> Andrew Williams, “Delivering Effective Student Feedback in Higher Education: An Evaluation of the Challenges and Best Practice,” *International Journal of Research in Education and Science* 10, no. 2 (2024): 473–501, <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijres.3404>.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen D. Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, 1st ed, Language Teaching Methodology Series (Pergamon, 1982); O. Garcia, *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*, 1st ed.

context of this study, the flexibility to switch languages when students experience structural blockages is not positioned as the ultimate pedagogical goal, but rather as temporary psychological scaffolding. This flexibility serves a tactical purpose to keep the flow of communication alive while simultaneously shielding students from the fear of judgment and excessive mental strain. Through the implementation of error tolerance, both students and instructors can transform this fear into a more meaningful and liberating learning practice.<sup>21</sup> The next strategy focuses on collaborative, technology-based, and contextual learning. In practice, this strategy is implemented by decentralizing public assessment through inclusive small-group projects, which incorporate specific suggestions from informants 2 and 4, such as activities like “creating video content or vlogging with friends” on fun topics closely tied to daily life. These creative digital projects give students the freedom to explore new vocabulary without the pressure of rigid spontaneity. Informants indicated a sense of psychological comfort because they could discuss unfamiliar topics with friends and were even allowed to “look it up on Google” first when they had trouble constructing sentences. This activity is considered more effective because students can explore new vocabulary in small groups, which reduces the pressure of direct evaluation and fosters a positive, supportive atmosphere for speaking Arabic. A collaborative approach to learning can provide a broad and rich learning context where active and effective knowledge exchange and student communication take place.<sup>22</sup>

This study confirms that the success of improving Arabic speaking skills is not achieved solely through strengthening cognitive aspects but must fully integrate classroom environmental factors and students’ sense of safety with learning strategies tailored to their specific conditions. Crises caused by the classroom social environment and demotivation can be effectively addressed through efforts to provide appreciative feedback, the application of error tolerance, and collaborative learning that is structured effectively and meaningfully. The implications of this study call for a role for instructors who can facilitate students’ ability to speak Arabic in their learning without fear or heavy mental burdens. The findings of this

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2014., with L. Wei and SpringerLink (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765>.

<sup>21</sup> Janet Metcalfe, “Learning from Errors,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 68, no. Volume 68, 2017 (2017): 465–89, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010416-044022>.

<sup>22</sup> Loes de Jong et al., “School-Based Collaboration as a Learning Context for Teachers: A Systematic Review,” *International Journal of Educational Research* 112 (January 2022): 101927, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2022.101927>.

study provide a foundation for educational institutions to develop curriculum components that are sensitive to and aligned with students' psychological needs.

## **Conclusion**

The obstacles encountered in learning Arabic speaking skills do not stem solely from cognitive aspects but are also significantly influenced by the classroom's social environment and student demotivation. Language anxiety resulting from fear of judgment by peers and direct correction by instructors leads to student demotivation, making them reluctant to speak Arabic. Therefore, a paradigm shift in the teaching strategies employed by instructors is essential. Strategy development must be grounded primarily in students' psychological needs. Practically, three strategies that can address the root of this problem are the implementation of appreciative and delayed feedback, the application of an error-tolerant approach in the learning process, and the transformation of language-enhancement activities from individual spontaneity into collaborative learning projects that emphasize meaning and effectiveness. The reconstruction of this emotionally safe learning environment ultimately becomes an absolute prerequisite before students can produce spoken language fluently and with confidence.

Nevertheless, this study has limitations in that the number of informants was restricted to four students in a single classroom and the study was conducted at a specific location within the Arabic Language Education Program at the Indonesian University of Education, with an exploratory focus based on students' self-reported experiences. These characteristics were designed so that the resulting findings could provide a deep, contextual understanding and emphasize the transferability of the research results. Given these limitations, recommendations for future research are directed toward testing the effectiveness of the three learning strategies mentioned above through a quantitative experimental approach or Classroom Action Research (PTK) with a broader sample size.

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