

The Implementation of Project-Based Learning in Improving Arabic Speaking Skills: A Case Study At Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin

Taṭbīqu at-Ta'allumi al-Qā'imi 'alā al-Mashārī fī Taḥsīni Mahārati al-Kalāmi bi al-Lughati al-'Arabiyyah: Dirāsatu Ḥālatin fī Ma'hadī Manba'i aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn

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Abstract

Mastering Arabic speaking skills is a primary objective of Arabic language education. However, this objective is often hindered by traditional instructional approaches that lack authentic, real-world contexts. This study aims to achieve two main objectives: (1) to explore the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in improving the Arabic speaking skills of students at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin and (2) to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the implementation of this instructional strategy. This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed two major results. First, regarding the implementation process, Project-Based Learning was carried out through three main stages: (a) establishing a supportive learning environment to foster students' self-confidence; (b) integrating authentic real-life contexts and meaningful tasks, such as market simulation activities and the production of instructional videos; and (c) implementing peer assessment and self-reflection to enhance students' metacognitive awareness. Second, concerning the influencing factors, the supporting factors included teachers' commitment and creativity, as well as students' positive responses and high levels of enthusiasm. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors consisted of limited instructional time, inadequate learning resources, and differences in students' language proficiency levels, which required flexible group management strategies. The study concludes that Project-Based Learning is an effective instructional strategy for comprehensively improving Arabic speaking skills. These findings provide empirical evidence and practical guidance for teachers in Islamic boarding school educational settings. Furthermore, the study offers a significant theoretical contribution by enriching the academic literature through the integration of active learning and constructivist learning theories with the cultural and pedagogical characteristics of traditional Islamic educational institutions.

Keywords: Arabic Speaking Skills; Project-Based Learning; Supportive Learning Environment.

ملخص

يعد إتقان مهارة الكلام الهدف الرئيس في تعليم اللغة العربية، غير أنه كثيراً ما يواجه عوائق بسبب الأساليب التعليمية التقليدية التي تفتقر إلى السياق الواقعي الأصيل. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحقيق هدفين رئيسيين، وهما: (1) استكشاف عملية تطبيق التعلم القائم على المشروع في تنمية مهارة الكلام باللغة العربية لدى طلاب معهد منبع الصالحين، و(2) تحديد العوامل المساندة والمعيقة

لتطبيق هذه الاستراتيجية. أما من حيث المنهجية، فقد استخدمت هذه الدراسة المدخل النوعي، بمنهج دراسة الحالة. وُجعت البيانات من خلال أدوات المقابلات المتعمقة، والملاحظة، وتحليل الوثائق. وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام تقنية التحليل التفاعلي (التي تشمل تكييف البيانات، وعرضها، واستخلاص النتائج). وكشفت نتائج الدراسة بناءً على الأهداف المحددة عما يلي: (1) فيما يخص عملية التطبيق، فقد مر التعلم القائم على المشروع بثلاث مراحل رئيسية: أ) إنشاء بيئة تعليمية داعمة لتعزيز ثقة الطلاب بأنفسهم، ب) دمج السياقات الواقعية والمهام الأصيلة مثل محاكاة السوق وإنتاج الفيديوهات التعليمية، ج) تطبيق التقييم بين الأقران والتأمل الذاتي لرفع الوعي فوق المعرفي. (2) وفيما يخص العوامل المؤثرة، تمثلت العوامل المساندة في التزام المعلمين وإبداعهم، إلى جانب الاستجابة الإيجابية والحماس الكبير لدى الطلاب؛ بينما تمثلت العوامل المعيقة في ضيق الوقت، وقلة الموارد، وتفاوت مستوى الكفاءة اللغوية بين الطلاب مما يتطلب استراتيجيات مرنة لإدارة المجموعات. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن التعلم القائم على المشروع يعد استراتيجية فعالة لتنمية مهارة الكلام باللغة العربية بصورة شمولية. وتقدم هذه النتائج أدلة تجريبية وتوجيهات عملية للمعلمين في البيئة التعليمية للمعاهد، كما تقدم أثراً نظرياً مهماً يتمثل في إثراء الأدبيات الأكاديمية من خلال دمج نظريات التعلم النشط والبنائية مع المتطلبات الثقافية والتربوية الخاصة بمؤسسات التعليم الإسلامي التقليدية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم القائم على المشاريع؛ مهارة الكلام باللغة العربية؛ بيئة تعليمية داعمة.

INTRODUCTION

Mastery of Arabic speaking skills *mahārah al-kalām* is a fundamental objective in language education, serving as a critical indicator of a student's ability to engage in active and spontaneous communication using the target language.¹ However, across broader educational and social contexts, language instruction frequently encounters universal challenges in cultivating authentic environments that stimulate active speaking. Traditional teaching methodologies such as direct lecturing, structural exercises, and rote vocabulary memorization continue to prevail in many language classes.² These conventional approaches disproportionately prioritize grammar and cognitive aspects, leaving students with insufficient opportunities to practice and develop their speaking fluency and accuracy.³

Consequently, a significant gap exists between educational theories that promote communicative competence and the realities observed in teaching practice. Many students acquire a strong comprehension of grammatical rules but still struggle profoundly to articulate their thoughts and ideas verbally in Arabic.⁴ To address these universal issues in

¹ Annisa Ainurrohman Kinnatul 'Ashriyyah Muhammad A'inul Haq, Ulya Mahfudhotun Najwa, "The Impact Of Memory Strategies On Arabic Speaking Skills: An Experimental Study In Indonesian Islamic Boarding Schools: Pengaruh Strategi Memori Terhadap Kemampuan Berbicara Bahasa Arab: Sebuah Studi Eksperimental Di Pondok Pesantren Di Indonesia," *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 3, no. 02 SE-Articles (December 29, 2025): 85–105, <https://doi.org/10.33754/lughati.v3i02.1775>.

² Muhammad A'inul Haq, "Dampak Media Musik Dalam Pemerolehan Mufrodlat Siswa Kelas Enam Tarbiyatul Athfal Bojonegoro," *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 01 SE-Articles (July 3, 2024): 69–82, <http://ejournal.unkafa.ac.id/index.php/lughati/article/view/943>.

³ Sitti Rohelah, "Hubungan Kegiatan Latihan Khitobah Dan Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab," *Dirosat Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.28944/dirosat.v5i2.505>.

⁴ Mariaty Podungge and Alvons Habibie, "The Role of the Language Section in Improving the Arabic and English Speaking Skills of the Students of the Hubulo Islamic Boarding School," *Jurnal Eduscience* 9, no. 3 (2022): 602–14, <https://doi.org/10.36987/jes.v9i3.3079>; Mahfuz R Mubarak, Noor A Audina, and Bimaghfirana Muhammad, "Enhancing Arabic Speaking Skills: A Societal Approach at an Indonesian Islamic Boarding School

mahārah al-kalām instruction, modern educational frameworks advocate for more interactive approaches.⁵ Project-Based Learning (PBL), for instance, has gained widespread recognition as an effective strategy for fostering collaborative, student-centered, and contextualized learning, theoretically enhancing student engagement, motivation, and problem-solving skills.⁶ Yet, transitioning from theoretical potential to practical implementation remains a major challenge, particularly due to entrenched passive learning cultures in specialized institutions.⁷

Recent studies published within the last five years have extensively documented various strategies to improve Arabic speaking skills and address learning challenges in boarding school settings. For example, research highlights how addressing *santri* (students)' cultural perceptions toward Arabic learning is essential, emphasizing that sociocultural factors deeply influence language acquisition.⁸ Furthermore, investigations into the broader prospects and challenges of Arabic studies in Indonesia confirm that institutional constraints often impede communicative language teaching.⁹ Other scholars have explored how structured extracurricular language courses successfully build student discipline and confidence in using Arabic.¹⁰

Additional contemporary literature has explored specific institutional strategies and instructional models. Studies exploring traditional Islamic literature in coastal cultures demonstrate the deep-rooted philological traditions that influence boarding school

University - Implementation Challenges and Remedies," *Jallt* 1, no. 2 (2024): 101–16, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jallt.v1i2.148>.

⁵ Mohammad Sholeh, "Kajian Kitab Tura< Th Berbasis Musyawarah Dalam Membentuk Tipologi Berpikir Di Pondok Pesantren Langitan Widang Tuban Jawa Timur" (Surabaya: Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel, 2018); Muhammad A'inul Haq, "Efektifitas Metode Ceramah Untuk Meningkatkan Maharah Kalam Mahasiswa Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih Gresik," *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 3, no. 01 SE-Articles (June 29, 2025): 33–52, <https://doi.org/10.33754/lughati.v3i01.1581>.

⁶ Siti Sanah, Odang Odang, and Yuni Lutfiyani, "Model Pengembangan Keterampilan Berbahasa Arab Di Pesantren," *Ta Lim Al- Arabiyyah Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 6, no. 2 (2022): 271–93, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v6i2.20164>.

⁷ Mu'in Abdullah and Muhammad P Kuncoro, "Kegiatan Ektrakurikuler LCD (Language Course Departement) Membangun Disiplin Bahasa Arab Santri Pondok Pesantren Majelis Tafsir Al Quran (MTA) Karanganyar," *Al Ulya Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2024): 53–64, <https://doi.org/10.32665/alulya.v9i1.2725>; Muhammad Abdullah, Siti Rukayah, and Heriyanto Heriyanto, "Revitalizing Javanese Islamic Literature: A Philological and Oral Tradition Study in Coastal Culture," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 13, no. 6 (2024): 180, <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2024-0187>; Adib P Ramadhan and Mohammad Luthfi, "Strategi Komunikasi Pondok Pesantren Al-Istiqomah Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Sebagai Bahasa Bahasa Resmi," *Sahafa Journal of Islamic Communication* 3, no. 1 (2020): 25, <https://doi.org/10.21111/sjic.v3i1.4653>.

⁸ Cecep Farhani et al., "Comparative Study of Arabic Learning Materials in Traditional and Modern Pondok Pesantren in North Sumatera, Indonesia," *Insania Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 28, no. 1 (2023): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.24090/insania.v28i1.6929>; Nurdin Nurdin and Anwar Hafidzi, "Application of Constructivist Approach by Kiyai in Arabic Language Teaching at Al-Falah Pesantren, Banjarbaru: An Active Learning Model to Enhance Arabic Language Skills," *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen Dan Pendidikan (Jimpian)* 3, no. 1 (2023): 13–20, <https://doi.org/10.30872/jimpian.v3i1.2195>.

⁹ Muhammad Ainul Haq and Efan Chairul Abdi, "Manajemen Perencanaan Kurikulum Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dalam Menghasilkan Kualifikasi Lulusan Unkafa," *ARABIA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 02 (2024): 87–99.

¹⁰ Abdullah and Kuncoro, "Kegiatan Ektrakurikuler LCD (Language Course Departement) Membangun Disiplin Bahasa Arab Santri Pondok Pesantren Majelis Tafsir Al Quran (MTA) Karanganyar."

pedagogies.¹¹ Furthermore, institutional communication strategies have been analyzed to understand how Arabic is enforced as an official daily language.¹² Comparative studies on traditional and modern *pesantren* highlight variations in adapting learning materials for active communication,¹³ while other research advocates for constructivist approaches to enhance Arabic skills,¹⁴ alongside the implementation of specific classical methods like the *Ibtidai* method.¹⁵ While these studies provide valuable insights into extracurricular environments, institutional strategies, and general instructional models, a significant gap remains. Most existing research treats speaking proficiency, cultural dynamics, and pedagogical methods as separate entities. In contrast, this present study offers a novel contribution by synthesizing the technical integration of Project-Based Learning into the unique curriculum of a specific *pesantren*. Unlike prior studies that focus on broad active learning or structural discipline, this research critically analyzes the tangible impacts, challenges, and dynamic responses during the direct implementation of PBL for *mahārah al-kalām*.

The selection of this research topic is driven by a well-developed rationale rooted in both theoretical significance and academic necessity. Theoretically, while PBL is widely recognized for fostering engagement, its specific adaptability within traditional Islamic educational frameworks remains underexplored. This study contributes to the expanding academic discourse by testing how modern, student-centered paradigms can be integrated into environments traditionally dominated by rote memorization. Justifying this choice from an academic perspective is crucial, as it provides a necessary synthesis of active learning theories with culturally specific pedagogical demands, thereby bridging the divide between generalized educational theory and specialized institutional practice.

From a practical and real-world perspective, finding an effective approach to solve the persistent issue of passive language acquisition is urgently needed. This practical relevance is strongly reinforced by empirical findings from the field at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin. At this institution, which emphasizes language acquisition as a medium for delving into Islamic knowledge, substantial attention is given to improving students' speaking skills. However, empirical observations reveal that educational practices here frequently encounter concrete obstacles in creating authentic contexts that encourage students to actively speak Arabic. Addressing this localized reality through the implementation of PBL provides concrete, tested strategic models that can transform the learning culture in measurable, practical terms for educators in similar *pesantren* environments.

¹¹ Abdullah, Rukayah, and Heriyanto, "Revitalizing Javanese Islamic Literature: A Philological and Oral Tradition Study in Coastal Culture."

¹² Ramadhan and Luthfi, "Strategi Komunikasi Pondok Pesantren Al-Istiqomah Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Sebagai Bahasa Resmi."

¹³ Farhani et al., "Comparative Study of Arabic Learning Materials in Traditional and Modern Pondok Pesantren in North Sumatera, Indonesia."

¹⁴ Nurdin and Hafidzi, "Application of Constructivist Approach by Kiyai in Arabic Language Teaching at Al-Falah Pesantren, Banjarbaru: An Active Learning Model to Enhance Arabic Language Skills."

¹⁵ Ade A Ardiansyah, "Implementasi Metode Ibtidai Dalam Pembelajaran Kitab Kuning Di Pondok Pesantren Hidayatul Mubtadien Majalengka," *Al-Ittijah Jurnal Keilmuan Dan Kependidikan Bahasa Arab* 12, no. 1 (2020): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.32678/al-ittijah.v12i01.1329>.

To address these challenges and bridge the identified gaps, the present study is designed to systematically implement the Project-Based Learning strategy in the teaching of Arabic speaking skills at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin. The primary objectives of this research are to observe, analyze, and document the implementation process of the PBL strategy for developing students' Arabic speaking skills. Furthermore, this study aims to identify and evaluate the supporting and inhibiting factors encountered during its implementation. Ultimately, the research intends to measure the extent to which this strategy enhances students' speaking abilities, offering clear empirical insights into its practical effectiveness.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach and adopted a case study design to comprehensively examine the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) and the various factors influencing its execution at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin.¹⁶ The research involved participants, specifically *santri* (students) and *Ustāz/Ustāzah* (Arabic language teachers), with prominent informants including *Ustāz* A. K. and *Ustāzah* N. L. Data collection was accomplished through the application of triangulation techniques,¹⁷ which included in-depth interviews to understand participants' perceptions, experiences, and challenges; direct observation of classroom dynamics; and document analysis of reflective journals kept by *santri* to delineate their metacognitive processes. The qualitative data collected were subsequently analyzed using the interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña.¹⁸ This technique involves three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation (or reduction), data display (structuring the presentation of data in narrative form), and conclusion drawing or verification, which correlates field findings with established theoretical frameworks.

The methodical approach utilized in this study reveals critical insights into the stages of PBL implementation while identifying both supportive and obstructive factors affecting its efficacy. Wangid et al. highlight the importance of pedagogical competence among teachers, noting that teacher efficacy is crucial in facilitating student engagement in the learning process, which is foundational for the successful implementation of methodologies like PBL.¹⁹ Additionally, Sormin et al. underscore the need for curriculum adaptability to enhance student outcomes, a principle pertinent to PBL, which thrives on integrating student-centered

¹⁶ Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018).

¹⁷ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014).

¹⁸ Matthew B Miles, A Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2020).

¹⁹ Muhammad N Wangid, Ali Mustadi, and Siti E Mokshien, "The Exploration of Teachers' Efficacy in Teaching: Comparative Study in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendidikan* 39, no. 2 (2020): 257–68, <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v39i2.30012>.

learning within flexible curriculum structures.²⁰ Furthermore, this research aligns with findings by Adiati, who emphasizes that similar PBL applications significantly enhance students' research capabilities and digital literacy, thereby enriching their learning experiences.²¹ The triangulation approach in data gathering ensures a more nuanced understanding of the PBL implementation context, consistently supported by insights from these studies, which illuminate the significance of effective teaching strategies and the adaptation of pedagogical practices in fostering meaningful learning experiences.

Through these qualitative methods, the research not only clarifies the procedural stages of PBL implementation but also offers a holistic view of the educational dynamics at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin, ultimately contributing to an understanding of the factors that both facilitate and hinder the effectiveness of such pedagogical approaches.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in Enhancing Arabic Speaking Skills at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in enhancing speaking skills, particularly in the context of Arabic language learning at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin, is characterized by a holistic approach that includes psychological and linguistic aspects. The approach is structured into three main phases.

Initial Phase: Creating a Supportive Learning Environment

In the initial phase of implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin, it has become evident that creating a supportive learning environment is essential in encouraging students (*santri*) to speak without the fear of making mistakes. Interviews conducted with *Ustāz* A. K., an Arabic language teacher, revealed that many students initially experienced embarrassment and anxiety when attempting to speak Arabic. However, after the introduction of project-based activities such as video conversations and group presentations, there was a significant shift in the students' attitudes and confidence levels. *Ustāz* A. K. noted, *"Initially, many students felt shy and afraid to make mistakes when speaking Arabic. However, after we implemented projects like creating conversation videos and group presentations, they became more confident"*. These findings underscore the notion that a positive learning environment can foster a willingness to speak, which aligns with the research conducted by Mohammed,²² who asserts that project-based learning enhances

²⁰ Salman A Sormin, Yonarlianto Tembang, and Lay Riwu, "Analysis of Readiness Factors for Islamic Boarding Schools to Implement the Merdeka Curriculum," *Technium Social Sciences Journal* 50 (2023): 137–45, <https://doi.org/10.47577/tssj.v50i1.9881>.

²¹ Gracia Adiati, "Digital Literacy in Post-Pandemic Project Based Learning at Sekolah Kembang Jakarta," *Wacana Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi* 22, no. 1 (2023): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.32509/wacana.v22i1.1503>.

²² Tawffeek A S Mohammed, "Designing an Arabic Speaking and Listening Skills E- Course: Resources, Activities and Students' Perceptions," *The Electronic Journal of E-Learning* 20, no. 1 (2022): pp53-68, <https://doi.org/10.34190/ejel.20.1.2177>.

students' motivation and confidence in language use.²³ Additionally, studies by Agustina²⁴ demonstrate that a safe environment free from fear and negative judgment fosters active participation in oral communication, supporting the idea that such conditions are crucial in language acquisition.²⁵ This supportive framework not only mitigates fear but also enhances students' overall enthusiasm for language use.

Observations at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin further corroborate these findings. During project-based learning sessions, students appeared more engaged and willing to express their opinions and participate in group discussions in Arabic. While grammatical and pronunciation errors persisted, students exhibited keen enthusiasm to speak. Teachers opted for a constructive feedback approach, gently correcting mistakes rather than through direct confrontation, thus encouraging a growth mindset. For instance, if a student misconstrued a sentence, the teacher would model the correct structure while praising the student's efforts to speak.

Furthermore, social interaction and emotional support are pivotal in nurturing a positive learning environment. Teachers frequently initiated lessons with language games or ice-breaking activities that helped alleviate tension, making students feel more comfortable and courageous in voicing their thoughts. Such collaborative activities fostered teamwork, as students assisted each other in correcting pronunciation errors and motivating one another to present, which aligns with the importance of managing social relations in a learning environment.²⁶

From an analytical perspective, this phenomenon illustrates that the initial phase of PBL serves as a psychological foundation for successful Arabic language acquisition. The creation of a supportive learning atmosphere transforms students' orientations from fearing failure to desiring performance. Therefore, a positive learning environment significantly influences not only affective aspects such as courage and motivation but also impacts the gradual improvement of students' speaking competencies.

In conclusion, the research signifies that establishing a safe, appreciative, and communicative classroom climate is a strategic step toward enhancing the effectiveness of PBL in Arabic language education, particularly in the early stages of developing speaking skills. Such an environment facilitates positive interactions conducive to language mastery, supporting students' overall educational journey.

²³ Mohammed.

²⁴ Diah D Agustina et al., "Enhancing Confidence and Fluency Through Project Based Learning for Basic Speaking Course," *Journal Corner of Education Linguistics and Literature* 5, no. 001 (2025): 94–101, <https://doi.org/10.54012/jcell.v5i001.540>.

²⁵ Muhammad R Perkasa, "Efektifitas Metode Langsung Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab : Studi Litelatur," *Learning Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 5, no. 3 (2025): 1464–72, <https://doi.org/10.51878/learning.v5i3.6645>.

²⁶ Pål Ellingsen et al., "Learning From Problem-Based Projects in Cross-Disciplinary Student Teams," *Education Sciences* 11, no. 6 (2021): 259, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11060259>.

Second Phase: Integration of Real-World Contexts and Authentic Tasks

In the second phase of Project-Based Learning (PBL) implementation at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin, the focus shifts towards integrating authentic real-life contexts and executing relevant tasks that resonate with students' experiences. This stage emphasizes connecting Arabic language instruction with genuine communication scenarios, enabling students not only to understand the language theoretically but also to apply it functionally in social and practical contexts.

According to interviews conducted with several Arabic language teachers, the projects assigned to students include simulations of marketplace conversations, conducting interviews in Arabic, and creating thematic vlogs about daily life in the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). These projects are meticulously designed to allow students to use Arabic in meaningful and contextual situations. One teacher elaborated: *"We strive to create projects that are close to their lives. For instance, students are asked to create a buying-and-selling video at the market or interview friends in Arabic. This way, they learn to speak in context rather than just memorizing dialogues"*.

This approach aligns with literature emphasizing student-centered projects connected to learners' life experiences, thereby enhancing motivation and engagement in learning.²⁷ As noted by Febriyanto & Manshur, active methodologies such as PBL effectively involve students in the learning process while simultaneously fostering critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills.²⁸

Data from field observations indicates that, during this second phase, students appear more enthusiastic and actively engaged in each project activity. When tasked with producing conversation videos or simulating real-life scenarios, students collaborated in groups with evident enthusiasm. They discussed scripts, assigned roles, and practiced pronunciation before performing. This activity indirectly intensifies their speaking skills while nurturing a sense of responsibility and group solidarity. Moreover, teachers play the role of facilitators, monitoring the process and providing guidance without overshadowing the students' activities. In one observed session, a teacher offered light feedback such as "this sentence could be more natural" or "try repeating with more lively expressions," illustrating a shift in the teacher's role from instructor to guide, which promotes independent learning.

Analytically, this phase reflects the application of the "learning by doing" principle within the context of Arabic language instruction. By engaging students in authentic tasks, they not only practice speaking but also grasp how language functions for interaction, negotiation, and expression of ideas in real situations. Such projects bridge classroom learning with the outside world, creating a more meaningful educational experience.

²⁷ Adib J Gusma et al., "Exploring Project-Based Learning's Role in the Development of Arabic Students' Speaking Skills Through Experiential Learning Theory," *Mantiqay Tayr Journal of Arabic Language* 5, no. 2 (2025): 161–82, <https://doi.org/10.25217/mantiqutayr.v5i2.5792>.

²⁸ Rifqi A Febriyanto and Umar Manshur, "Dampak Metode Debat Terhadap Keterampilan Bahasa Arab (Berbicara) Siswa," *As-Sabiqun* 7, no. 3 (2025): 549–61, <https://doi.org/10.36088/assabiqun.v7i3.5703>.

In conclusion, the integration of real contexts and authentic tasks plays a crucial role in enhancing Arabic speaking skills at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin. This second phase not only strengthens students' linguistic competencies but also builds their confidence, collaborative spirit, and adaptive capabilities in using Arabic communicatively across various situations.

Third Phase: Peer Assessment and Self-Reflection

The third phase of implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin emphasizes peer assessment and self-reflection as educational strategies that foster metacognitive awareness and personal responsibility regarding the learning process. In this stage, students take on roles not just as participants but also as evaluators and observers of their own performance, as well as that of their group peers. This approach is designed to encourage critical evaluation and reinforce reflective thinking skills in the use of the Arabic language.

Interviews with the Arabic language teacher, Ustāzah Nur Laili, revealed that peer assessment positively impacts students' attitudes and skills. She stated: *"After the project is completed, we ask students to evaluate their classmates' performances, focusing on fluency, courage, and the accuracy of sentence structures. They are also required to write brief reflections on what went well and what needs improvement. This process helps them become aware of how to speak effectively."*

These findings indicate that through the mechanisms of peer assessment and self-reflection, students gain higher linguistic and social awareness. They learn to provide constructive feedback while also receiving criticism with an open mind. This aligns with the views expressed by Neneng Darllis²⁹ in their study, which stated that peer assessment can enhance interpersonal communication skills and collective responsibility within project-based learning contexts.³⁰ Additionally, ³¹ emphasized the importance of self-reflection for autonomous learning, helping learners identify their strengths and weaknesses in language use.³²

Field observations further support these findings. In several project sessions, after group presentations, other students were invited to give comments or feedback on the presenting group's performance. This process occurred openly while maintaining ethics and mutual respect. For example, some students noted mispronounced words, while others

²⁹ Neneng Darllis, F Farida, and Yalvema Miaz, "Pengembangan Desain Pembelajaran Model Assure Berbasis Problem Based Learning Menggunakan Komik Di Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Basicedu* 5, no. 1 (2020): 334–42, <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i1.689>.

³⁰ Priscilla M A Hornay, Maria G Djehatu, and Floribertha Lake, "Exploring Students' Views on the Use of Photovoice for Self-Assessment and Peer Feedback in an Efl Context [Eksplorasi Pandangan Siswa Terhadap Pemanfaatan Photovoice Dalam Penilaian Diri Dan Umpan Balik Rekan Dalam Konteks Efl]," *Polyglot Jurnal Ilmiah* 21, no. 2 (2025): 228–49, <https://doi.org/10.19166/pji.v21i2.10009>.

³¹ Arif Widodo, "Nidzamu Ta'limi Al-Kalami Fi Dhau'l Al-Madkhali Al-Ittishaly Wa Al-La'bi Ad-Daury," *Al-Arabi: Journal of Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language* 4, no. 1 (2020): 91, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um056v4i1p91-115>.

³² Hornay, Djehatu, and Lake, "Exploring Students' Views on the Use of Photovoice for Self-Assessment and Peer Feedback in an Efl Context [Eksplorasi Pandangan Siswa Terhadap Pemanfaatan Photovoice Dalam Penilaian Diri Dan Umpan Balik Rekan Dalam Konteks Efl]."

praised their peers for their boldness and clarity in presenting ideas. The teacher facilitated discussions by highlighting the positive aspects of each performance and steering reflections toward the learning process.³³

Self-reflection was also conducted through writing short journals post-project completion. Students documented their experiences throughout the project, the challenges they faced, and strategies they planned to employ for improvements in future projects. Analysis of these reflective journals indicated that many students recognized the importance of teamwork, thorough preparation, and courage when speaking in public.³⁴

This third phase portrays peer assessment and self-reflection as core components of collaborative and self-aware learning. These components help students internalize their learning processes rather than merely pursue final project outcomes. This process also teaches values such as empathy, accountability, and openness to feedback, values that are crucial in the context of education within *pesantren*.³⁵

In conclusion, the application of peer assessment and self-reflection in the third phase of PBL plays a crucial role in strengthening students' affective and metacognitive dimensions. Through this practice, students not only enhance their technical speaking skills in Arabic but also develop self-awareness as reflective, collaborative learners who are continuously evolving toward educational autonomy.

Supporting Factors in the Implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) Strategies for Improving Speaking Skills

The Commitment and Creativity of Educators Play a Pivotal Role.

The successful implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) strategies for enhancing Arabic speaking skills at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin is significantly influenced by the commitment and creativity demonstrated by educators. These educators play a critical role as designers, promoters, and facilitators of learning, ensuring that each phase of the project is conducted effectively and meaningfully. Research indicates that teachers' dedication to preparing materials, proactively guiding students, and creating a conducive learning environment significantly enhances student engagement and participation.³⁶ This aligns with findings from Puspitasari, who emphasizes the vital role of educators in fostering a learning ecosystem conducive to developing 21st-century skills through PBL.³⁷

³³ Mohammed Almulla, "The Effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) Approach as a Way to Engage Students in Learning," *Sage Open* 10, no. 3 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020938702>.

³⁴ Ahmad S Hidayatullah et al., "Analisis Jenis Dan Teknik Asesmen Pembelajaran Pai Berbasis Multikultural," *Educational Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan & Pengajaran* 5, no. 2 (2025): 486–500, <https://doi.org/10.51878/educational.v5i2.6371>.

³⁵ Sofia Colabella and Elisa Bone, "A Collaborative Digital 'Treasure Hunt' to Build Student Engagement in Architectural Technology," *Pacific Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning* 6, no. 1 (2024): 12–13, <https://doi.org/10.24135/pjtel.v6i1.182>.

³⁶ Evi Puspitasari, "Project-Based Learning Implementation to Cultivate Preservice English Teachers' 21st Century Skills," *Ijeltal (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)* 5, no. 1 (2020): 191, <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v5i1.638>.

³⁷ Puspitasari.

Interviews with *Ustāz* Abdul Karim, a senior teacher at the institution, highlight that the enthusiasm and creativity of the teaching staff are fundamental to executing project activities. As articulated by him, *"The key is with the teacher. If the teacher lacks passion and creative ideas, the project cannot proceed."* This underscores the necessity for teachers to take the initiative in cultivating engaging and contextual learning experiences, which is further supported by the environmental factors outlined in Puspitasari's work.³⁸ Their analysis of PBL suggests that the approach aids in fostering essential skills, reinforcing how crucial it is for educators to innovate to maintain student interest and involvement.

Direct observations of classroom activities at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin corroborate these interviews, revealing a high level of dedication from the teachers. They actively assist students in selecting conversation topics, practicing pronunciation, and providing constructive feedback post-presentation. These activities exemplify a humanistic approach to education, focusing not solely on outcomes but also on the learning process, which echoes insights from Noor and Nurhayati,³⁹ who discuss the importance of teamwork and adaptive learning in PBL settings.

Moreover, innovation in teaching practices is evident in the creative methods and media educators employ. Some instructors incorporate digital technology, such as vlogs and interactive quizzes, to enhance the learning experience. This integration aligns with research by Wannapiroon and Petsangsri, which discusses how digital technologies can enhance creative thinking and innovation within learning environments.⁴⁰ Furthermore, publicizing student projects on internal platforms not only recognizes their efforts but also boosts their confidence and pride in their learning achievements, an aspect emphasized by Ridho et al., who explore student engagement in educational settings.⁴¹

In summary, the commitment and creativity of educators are firmly established as pivotal pillars for the success of Project-Based Learning implementation at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin. This commitment reflects teachers' responsibility to provide learner-centered experiences, while creativity offers avenues for innovation that cater to students' unique needs. Thus, the effectiveness of PBL is not merely reliant on curriculum design or facilities but fundamentally hinges on the strategic role of teachers who serve as inspirational and dedicated facilitators. Through their commitment and innovative approaches, project-based learning transcends being a mere educational method; it becomes a vital tool for fostering autonomy, resilience, and Arabic-speaking proficiency among students.

³⁸ Puspitasari.

³⁹ Agus H Noor and Sri Nurhayati, "Project-Based Learning Implementation in a Participative Planning Course: Strategies, Outcomes, and Challenges," *Cahaya Pendidikan* 9, no. 2 (2024): 164–72, <https://doi.org/10.33373/chypend.v9i2.5660>.

⁴⁰ Naphong Wannapiroon and Sirirat Petsangsri, "Effects of STEAMification Model in Flipped Classroom Learning Environment on Creative Thinking and Creative Innovation," *Tem Journal*, 2020, 1647–55, <https://doi.org/10.18421/tem94-42>.

⁴¹ Ali Ridho, Abd. H Cholili, and Aprilia M Rosdiana, "Promoting Boarding Student Engagement Regards Resiliency and Gender: A Mediated - Moderation Analysis," 2023, 122–27, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-188-3_14.

Positive Responses and Enthusiasm of Students

The successful implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in Arabic language instruction at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin is greatly influenced by students' positive responses and enthusiasm. Active engagement, openness to new learning experiences, and a spirit of participation are crucial elements that support the effectiveness of project-based learning in enhancing speaking skills.⁴²

Field observations indicate that students demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm during PBL activities, especially when projects are applicable and contextual. For instance, in projects such as creating conversation videos, simulating transactions, and group presentations, students actively engaged in discussions, assigned roles, and practiced pronunciation to optimize their performances. This resulted in a dynamic classroom atmosphere, characterized by natural interactions between teachers and students, as well as among the students themselves.⁴³

A student interviewed expressed their experience: *"Learning through projects like this feels more fun. We can practice speaking directly, not just memorizing. Sometimes we make mistakes, but we become more courageous because the atmosphere isn't tense."* This statement reflects that students begin to perceive Arabic language learning as an enjoyable and challenging endeavor rather than merely an academic obligation. The joy and pride of being able to speak Arabic serve as intrinsic motivation for them to continue practicing. Research has shown that project-based learning enhances emotional engagement and study motivation, as learners feel a sense of control over their learning processes and outcomes.⁴⁴

Interviews with Arabic language teachers also revealed that changes in student attitudes serve as indicators of PBL success. One teacher remarked: *"In the past, many students were afraid to speak because they worried about making mistakes. But after participating in projects, they compete to perform. Even outside the classroom, they sometimes practice creating conversations in Arabic."* This data illustrates that students' enthusiasm extends beyond classroom activities into independent learning endeavors outside of formal schedules. They are beginning to develop learning initiatives and support each other in improving their speaking abilities. This shift indicates a change in the learning paradigm from teacher-centered to learner-centered education.⁴⁵

Analytically, students' enthusiasm and positive responses serve as indicators of the successful internalization of active learning values within PBL. When learners feel emotionally

⁴² Muhammad Ramzan et al., "Amplifying Classroom Enjoyment and Cultivating Positive Learning Attitudes Among ESL Learners," *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 11, no. 2 (2023): 2298–2308, <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.1102.0522>; Sultan Almelhes, "Enhancing Arabic Language Acquisition: Effective Strategies for Addressing Non-Native Learners' Challenges," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 10 (2024): 1116.

⁴³ Darío L Banegas and Robert J Lowe, "Creative Writing for Publication: An Action Research Study of Motivation, Engagement, and Language Development in Argentinian Secondary Schools," *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* 11, no. 3 (2021): 401–21, <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2021.11.3.5>.

⁴⁴ Almelhes, "Enhancing Arabic Language Acquisition: Effective Strategies for Addressing Non-Native Learners' Challenges."

⁴⁵ Ramzan et al., "Amplifying Classroom Enjoyment and Cultivating Positive Learning Attitudes Among ESL Learners."

engaged, they tend to be more resilient in the face of challenges and open to reflective processes and feedback. In the context of *pesantren*, this positive attitude also reflects the spirit of *tahsin al-lughah* (language enhancement) as part of ongoing self-improvement.⁴⁶ In conclusion, the positive responses and enthusiasm of students are crucial supporting factors in the successful implementation of PBL at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin. Through active engagement and high motivation, students not only significantly develop their speaking skills but also foster a sense of self-confidence, independent learning, and a love for the Arabic language as a medium of communication and self-expression.

Impeding Factors in the Implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) Strategies for Improving Speaking Skills

Time and Resource Limitations

While Project-Based Learning (PBL) strategies have the potential to enhance Arabic speaking skills, their implementation at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin encounters significant constraints, particularly surrounding time and resource limitations. These factors serve as considerable barriers that educators perceive as hindering optimal application of project-based learning methodologies.

Field interviews with several Arabic language instructors indicated that PBL requires significantly more preparation compared to traditional teaching methods. One teacher articulated: *"When using the project method, we need to prepare many elements: from project ideas, supporting learning materials, group divisions, to assessments. All of this takes significantly longer than a traditional lecture method."* This assertion aligns with findings by Marinda Noviani and Moh Hasan⁴⁷, who indicate that effective project-based learning necessitates extensive planning and organization.⁴⁸ Instructors not only act as knowledge transmitters but also serve as facilitators who manage project dynamics, monitor group progress, and provide ongoing feedback. Time constraints within the academic calendar often prevent educators from executing all project stages optimally.

In addition to time constraints, limitations in available resources also pose a significant hindrance. Observational research shows that certain project endeavors necessitate supportive tools, such as digital devices for creating conversational videos or technology-based learning media. However, access to adequate resources is not uniform across classrooms, which aligns with the findings of Hatmanto and Rahmawati,⁴⁹ indicating that the

⁴⁶ Banegas and Lowe, "Creative Writing for Publication: An Action Research Study of Motivation, Engagement, and Language Development in Argentinian Secondary Schools."

⁴⁷ Marinda Noviani and Moh. A K Hasan, "Problematisasi Dan Solusi Pembelajaran Keterampilan Berbicara Pada Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Di UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta," *Rayah Al-Islam* 7, no. 1 (2023): 245–59, <https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v7i1.662>.

⁴⁸ Noviani and Hasan.

⁴⁹ Endro D Hatmanto and Fitria Rahmawati, "Crafting Dynamic Lesson Plans: Designing Differentiated Learning Approaches for Teaching Reading Skills in the Philippines," *Iccs* 1, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.18196/iccs.v1i2.124>.

development of various and authentic learning materials in PBL is often constrained by insufficient facilities and technical support within educational institutions⁵⁰.

Further complicating matters, the overcrowded curriculum at the *pesantren*, which encompasses various fields of knowledge, restricts the time available to conduct projects effectively. Educators often find themselves forced to adjust project activities to avoid disrupting the achievement of other learning objectives. As a result, critical phases, such as reflection or in-depth assessment, may sometimes be conducted more superficially. However, several teachers observe that the considerable time investment required at the outset ultimately provides long-term benefits. Once students grasp the operational mechanics of projects and become accustomed to collaborative systems, the learning process tends to become more effective and efficient. This perspective supports,⁵¹ who suggest that the long-term benefits of PBL including increased student engagement and application of skills in real-world contexts may outweigh the initial challenges encountered.⁵²

Therefore, strategic sustainability measures and appropriate allocation of time and resources are crucial for overcoming these hurdles. Efficiency improvements can be achieved through planned use of digital technology, structured development of project modules, and teacher training to design PBL activities that are practical and contextualized within existing limitations. In conclusion, while time and resource constraints present primary challenges, a strategic and collaborative approach can ensure that PBL implementation remains effective and positively influences the development of speaking skills among students at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin.

Heterogeneity in Language Proficiency Among Students

Implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) strategies for developing speaking skills in language education faces several challenges, with the heterogeneity of language abilities among students being a significant hurdle. In the context of Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin, varying levels of Arabic proficiency among students create disparities in participation during group activities, directly impacting the effectiveness of the learning process. These differences range from students who are just beginning to acquire the language to those who are fluent. This aligns with research indicating that linguistic diversity can impede equal participation within collaborative environments, thus hampering collective learning outcomes.⁵³

⁵⁰ Destantya A N Adi and Najih Anwar, "Application of Cooperative Learning Method of Student Team Achievement Division Model to Improve Arabic Language Learning Outcomes for Class X Students at Madrasah Aliyah Darul Fikri Sidoarjo," *Ipteks* 1, no. 1 (2024): 29–38, <https://doi.org/10.61796/ipteks.v1i1.89>.

⁵¹ Noviani and Hasan, "Problematika Dan Solusi Pembelajaran Keterampilan Berbicara Pada Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Di UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta."

⁵² Noviani and Hasan.

⁵³ Muhammad Anwar et al., "Project Based Learning Model in Teaching Deutsch FÅ±r Tourismus for Foreign Language Students," *Journal of Educational Science and Technology (Est)*, 2020, 217–23, <https://doi.org/10.26858/est.v6i2.13805>.

Field observations reveal that within project groups, students showcase marked differences in participation; while some exhibit confidence and fluency in speaking, others display hesitance and reluctance to engage. The more proficient students often take on leadership roles in discussions, while those with lower proficiency tend to adopt a more passive role. This observation is consistent with findings that disparities in language skills can result in dominance effects, where the more capable students inadvertently overshadow their peers, limiting learning opportunities for the latter.⁵⁴

In an interview, *Ustāzah* Lailatul Fitriyah emphasized: *"the significance of collaborative dynamics among students, noting that while more skilled speakers often assist peers experiencing difficulty, this scenario can lead to imbalances if not properly managed."* The importance of equitable collaboration in enhancing the educational experience underscores the necessity for careful group management strategies.⁵⁵ Such dynamics affirm the need for differentiated instruction approaches, which can meet diverse learner needs by allocating distinct roles based on each student's abilities.⁵⁶

To mitigate the challenges posed by this heterogeneity, educators at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin adopt an adaptive group management strategy. The grouping is both heterogeneous and strategic, ensuring that each student bears responsibility suited to their capabilities, be it as an idea designer, scriptwriter, technical organizer, or presenter. This approach fosters inclusivity and collective contribution, reflecting core principles of differentiated instruction and helping enhance language skills across the learner spectrum.⁵⁷ Additionally, individual support is provided to those struggling with speaking skills, with pre-presentation practice sessions designed to bolster their confidence and readiness for active participation. This method effectively encourages more engaged and active involvement from all group members.⁵⁸

In conclusion, while the diversity in Arabic language abilities presents a tangible challenge in applying PBL, thoughtful management strategies allow educators to leverage these differences. Such strategies not only facilitate a more inclusive and collaborative learning atmosphere but also promote the unified development of speaking skills among all students at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin.

⁵⁴ Thi A D Vo, "Student's Attitudes Towards Communicative Activities on EFL Student's Speaking Performance," *International Journal of Language Instruction* 1, no. 1 (2022): 143–54, <https://doi.org/10.54855/ijli.221112>.

⁵⁵ Kristina Francis et al., "Undergraduates' Awareness and Obstacles on English Language Speaking Skill," *International Journal of Education Psychology and Counseling* 5, no. 34 (2020): 176–88, <https://doi.org/10.35631/ijepc.5340014>.

⁵⁶ Anwar et al., "Project Based Learning Model in Teaching Deutsch FÅ±r Tourismus for Foreign Language Students."

⁵⁷ Vo, "Student's Attitudes Towards Communicative Activities on EFL Student's Speaking Performance."

⁵⁸ Muzdalifah and Editia Herningtias, "Online Learning Platforms for Teaching Indonesian to Foreign Speakers," *Kne Social Sciences*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v5i3.8543>.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a highly effective strategy for comprehensively developing Arabic speaking skills (*mahārah al-kalām*) at Ma'had Mambaus Sholihin. The implementation process systematically unfolded across three critical phases. Initially, creating a supportive and non-judgmental learning environment provided a necessary psychological foundation, significantly reducing students' anxiety and boosting their confidence to speak without fear of making mistakes. Subsequently, integrating real-world contexts and authentic tasks—such as market simulations and conversational vlogs—bridged the gap between theoretical grammar and practical communication. Finally, incorporating peer assessment and self-reflection fostered students' metacognitive awareness, encouraging them to take active ownership of their linguistic development and collaborative responsibilities. The overall effectiveness of this pedagogical approach was heavily influenced by specific supporting and inhibiting factors. The profound commitment and instructional creativity of the educators served as primary supporting catalysts; their ability to design contextual, student-centered activities directly fueled the enthusiastic and positive responses observed among the *santri*. Conversely, the implementation encountered notable challenges, specifically institutional constraints regarding time and resources, alongside the inherent heterogeneity in students' Arabic language proficiency. Addressing these barriers required adaptive group management, differentiated instruction, and a flexible curriculum, proving that the success of PBL hinges not merely on its theoretical framework, but heavily on the strategic management of classroom dynamics.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that future research explore the longitudinal impact of PBL on language retention and advanced fluency across a wider variety of traditional and modern *pesantren* contexts. Further investigations should also focus on developing specialized, resource-efficient PBL modules or frameworks specifically tailored for institutions operating with limited facilities and rigid academic schedules. Additionally, future experimental studies could examine the integration of low-cost digital technologies or artificial intelligence tools into the PBL framework to better accommodate the heterogeneity of student proficiency and maximize the efficiency of active Arabic language learning.

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