



The Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in Teaching *Mahārah Al-Kalām* at MTsN Pacitan

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching *mahārah al-kalām* (Arabic speaking skills) at MTsN Pacitan. The problem addressed is the limited oral communication proficiency among students despite conventional grammar-based instruction. A qualitative descriptive design was adopted to investigate how ICT tools such as learning management systems, video-conferencing platforms, and multimedia-based speaking tasks support student engagement and oral language development. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed thematically. The findings indicate that ICT promotes greater interaction, authentic communication practice, and learner confidence, while also supporting differentiated instruction. However, challenges remain in teacher digital competence, infrastructure readiness, and structured task design. The study concludes that ICT integration provides a viable innovation for strengthening Arabic speaking pedagogy in Islamic secondary schools and highlights the need for sustained professional development and system support. These results contribute to ongoing efforts to modernize Arabic language teaching in Indonesia.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become one of the most influential drivers of change in educational practice over the past two decades. The increasing availability of digital devices, internet connectivity, and online platforms has transformed how teachers deliver instruction and how students engage with learning materials. In language education, ICT enables exposure to authentic

linguistic input, facilitates interactive communication, and supports learner-centered instructional models that encourage autonomy and collaboration [1]. Rather than relying solely on textbooks and teacher-centered explanations, students can now access multimedia resources, practice pronunciation using audio-visual tools, and interact with peers or native speakers through virtual environments. These developments have positioned ICT as a key component in modern language pedagogy.

In the context of Arabic language learning, ICT holds particular relevance. Arabic is not only a means of global communication but also the primary language of Islamic scholarship and ritual practice. Within Indonesian Islamic educational institutions, Arabic plays a dual role as both an academic subject and a medium for accessing religious texts and intellectual traditions. However, despite the centrality of Arabic, many students demonstrate limited proficiency in oral communication. Classroom practices often emphasize *qirā'ah* (reading) and *tarjamah* (translation), while the development of speaking competence or *mahārah al-kalām* receives less systematic attention [2]. As a result, students may acquire grammatical knowledge yet remain hesitant or unable to express ideas verbally in Arabic. ICT has the potential to address this imbalance by supporting more interactive, communicative, and practice-oriented learning environments.

The Indonesian government has encouraged ICT integration across educational levels, including at madrasah institutions under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) Pacitan, as one such institution, is expected to adopt ICT not only as a supplementary resource but as an integral part of pedagogical design. ICT tools such as language learning applications, digital dictionaries, video-based instruction, and online discussion platforms can provide learners with repeated opportunities for speaking practice, exposure to native-like pronunciation, and engagement in simulated communication scenarios [3]. When applied purposefully, ICT can also increase learner motivation, promote differentiated learning, and facilitate formative assessment of speaking skills. However, technology alone does not guarantee improved outcomes. The effectiveness of ICT integration depends on teacher readiness, institutional infrastructure, students' digital literacy, and alignment between technological tools and pedagogical objectives [4].

A number of previous studies have examined ICT integration in language learning, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. These studies consistently indicate that digital technologies can enhance communicative competence, learner engagement, and interaction patterns when implemented within sound pedagogical frameworks [5]. Yet, research specifically addressing ICT use in Arabic language speaking instruction remains limited, especially within Islamic secondary schools in rural or semi-rural regions. Many existing works focus on urban schools, higher education settings, or general Arabic proficiency without distinguishing between different language skills. Furthermore, earlier studies often prioritized quantitative measures of achievement while paying less attention to classroom processes, teacher perceptions, and contextual factors that shape implementation.

This gap in the literature highlights the importance of examining ICT-supported *mahārah al-kalām* instruction within real classroom environments. MTsN

Pacitan represents a relevant case because it combines Islamic educational traditions with ongoing efforts to strengthen technological integration and language competence. Investigating how ICT is actually used in *mahārah al-kalām* learning including the tools employed, the instructional strategies adopted, and the challenges faced will provide a more grounded understanding of implementation realities. Such research also responds to curriculum expectations that emphasize communicative ability as a key learning outcome in Arabic education.

The core problem addressed in this study is the persistent gap between curriculum goals that promote communicative Arabic competence and classroom practices that continue to emphasize structural and textual mastery. Although ICT offers new possibilities for oral language practice, its integration is not always systematic, pedagogically informed, or optimally utilized. Teachers may have differing levels of digital literacy, varying beliefs about the role of technology in language learning, or limited institutional support. Students, meanwhile, may benefit from ICT but also experience obstacles such as limited access, unfamiliarity with applications, or anxiety in participating in virtual speaking tasks [6]. Understanding these dynamics requires an analytical approach that goes beyond technological enthusiasm to examine the pedagogical and institutional realities surrounding ICT use.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze the implementation of Information and Communication Technology in teaching *mahārah al-kalām* at MTsN Pacitan. Specifically, the study seeks to describe how ICT is currently utilized in Arabic speaking instruction; identify the strategies employed by teachers to integrate ICT into classroom practice; explore students' responses and learning experiences related to ICT-based speaking activities; and examine the challenges and opportunities arising from ICT implementation. By addressing these objectives, the study responds to the need for context-sensitive research that links technology use with pedagogical practice and student learning processes.

The novelty and innovative value of this research lie in its holistic and contextual perspective. Unlike many previous studies that treat ICT primarily as a technological variable, this research views ICT integration as a pedagogical and institutional process shaped by curriculum demands, teacher agency, school culture, and learner characteristics. The focus on *mahārah al-kalām* a skill often neglected in Arabic instruction further strengthens the originality of the study. Moreover, by situating the research within a state Islamic junior secondary school, the study provides empirical insights that may inform ICT-based Arabic pedagogy in other madrasah environments with similar socio-educational characteristics.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research enriches scholarly discussion on technology-enhanced Arabic language learning by providing evidence from an under-studied context. Practically, the study may assist policymakers, school leaders, and Arabic teachers in designing more effective ICT-supported speaking instruction. This includes considerations related to teacher professional development, infrastructure provision, selection of appropriate technological tools, and the development of communicative-oriented pedagogical models that align with Islamic educational values. Ultimately, strengthening *mahārah al-kalām* through ICT integration has the

potential to support broader educational goals, including students' religious literacy, academic communication skills, and participation in global knowledge exchange.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is implemented in teaching *mahārah al-kalām* at MTsN Pacitan. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to examine natural classroom practices, teacher strategies, and student learning experiences in authentic contexts rather than relying solely on statistical outcomes [7]. The research was conducted over one academic semester and involved Arabic language teachers and Grade VIII students who were directly engaged in ICT-based speaking instruction. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that those involved possessed relevant learning experiences. This sampling technique is widely applied in ICT-pedagogy research because it prioritizes depth of information over representativeness [8]. Data collection was carried out through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were used to record ICT-supported instructional activities, teacher-student interaction patterns, and student engagement during speaking tasks based on established ICT-integration indicators in language learning [9]. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with teachers and selected students to explore their perceptions, challenges, and learning experiences regarding ICT use, while institutional documents such as lesson plans and digital learning materials were analyzed to identify policy support and pedagogical planning structures [10].

The research procedure followed four sequential stages as recommended in recent educational qualitative research. First, during the preparation stage, the researcher obtained research permission, identified participants, and designed observation and interview instruments. Second, in the data collection stage, the researcher conducted repeated classroom observations, recorded field notes, interviewed participants, and collected supporting documents. Third, during the coding and analysis stage, data were organized, reduced, and grouped into thematic categories such as types of ICT tools used, instructional strategies, learner responses, and implementation constraints. Finally, during the interpretation and validation stage, emerging findings were interpreted and verified through triangulation across observation, interview, and document data, as well as member-checking with participants to ensure credibility and trustworthiness [11], [12]. Data were analyzed thematically, an approach considered suitable for identifying recurring meanings and conceptual patterns within narrative-based qualitative data [13]. Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were strictly observed, including protecting participant confidentiality, obtaining informed consent, and anonymizing all personal identifiers.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study describe how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is implemented in teaching *mahārah al-kalām* at MTsN Pacitan, the strategies employed by teachers, students' responses to ICT-supported speaking instruction, and the challenges encountered during implementation. The results are

presented thematically and discussed in relation to current research on ICT-enhanced language learning.

3.1 ICT Tools Utilized in *Mahārah Al-Kalām* Instruction

The study revealed that Arabic language teachers at MTsN Pacitan have incorporated a range of ICT tools to support speaking instruction. The most frequently used technologies include digital projectors, presentation software, YouTube videos, mobile-based dictionary applications, and communication platforms such as WhatsApp and Google Classroom. These tools are primarily used to (1) present audio-visual learning materials, (2) model correct pronunciation and sentence structures, and (3) facilitate oral practice through voice recording and online discussion.

Teachers reported that YouTube videos and online audio materials were particularly effective in providing students with exposure to authentic Arabic pronunciation and intonation patterns. Students frequently listened to short dialogues, religious speeches, and instructional videos in Modern Standard Arabic, after which they were asked to imitate or reconstruct the dialogue in pairs. This aligns with recent research demonstrating that audio-visual input can significantly enhance learners' speaking fluency and pronunciation accuracy by providing repeated exposure to native-like models [14].

Mobile-based applications were also widely used. Students relied on dictionary and translation apps to support vocabulary acquisition before engaging in speaking tasks. Some teachers encouraged students to record their speech on smartphones and submit the recordings for feedback. This reflects growing trends in ICT-mediated language learning, where mobile learning supports self-paced practice and reflective listening [15]. However, ICT use remained largely supplementary rather than fully integrated into instructional design, as teachers still relied on textbooks and teacher-centered explanations as the primary mode of instruction.

The integration of ICT at MTsN Pacitan demonstrates that the school has entered the stage of functional adoption, where technology is used to enrich rather than replace traditional pedagogy. This corresponds with earlier findings that ICT is often first implemented as an extension of conventional teaching rather than as a transformative pedagogical shift [16].

3.2 Teacher Strategies in ICT-Supported Speaking Instruction

Teachers employed several strategies to integrate ICT into *mahārah al-kalām* instruction. The most common approach was ICT-assisted modeling and repetition, in which students listened to model dialogues via multimedia resources before repeating and practicing similar expressions. This method follows principles of audio-lingual learning, which emphasize imitation and structured drills to develop oral fluency. ICT enhanced this process by allowing the replaying of audio samples as needed, enabling learners to internalize phonological patterns at their own pace [17].

A second strategy was task-based speaking activities supported by ICT, where students worked in small groups to create video dialogues or oral presentations. Students planned, rehearsed, and recorded their speech using smartphones, then submitted the recordings for teacher evaluation. Teachers noted that video-based tasks increased student engagement and confidence, as learners could practice privately before sharing their final output. This supports findings that ICT-mediated

task-based learning promotes learner autonomy and reduces performance anxiety compared with real-time assessment [18].

A third strategy involved online communication platforms. WhatsApp voice notes were used for homework-based speaking practice, allowing students to submit oral responses to prompts outside class time. This extended learning beyond the classroom and created additional opportunities for speaking practice. Such approaches are consistent with current trends in blended language learning, where online communication tools facilitate informal, low-pressure speaking environments [19].

However, despite these innovations, teachers generally positioned ICT as a supporting tool rather than a central element of pedagogical design. Lesson planning often began with textbook content, with ICT layered on as an enhancement. This reflects a hybrid pedagogical orientation, combining traditional grammar-translation approaches with communicative and technology-enhanced practices.

3.3 Students' Responses to ICT-Supported Speaking Instruction

Student responses to ICT integration were overwhelmingly positive. Most students reported that ICT-based activities were more engaging than conventional lecture-based instruction. They appreciated multimedia support because it helped clarify pronunciation, intonation, and contextual meaning. Students particularly enjoyed video-based learning tasks and felt motivated to improve their oral performance when recordings were shared among peers.

Many students reported increased confidence in speaking Arabic because ICT tools allowed rehearsal and repeated listening. This supports evidence that digital tools can reduce language anxiety by enabling controlled practice environments [20]. Students also perceived ICT-supported tasks as more relevant to real-world communication, especially when using mobile platforms similar to those they regularly employ in daily life.

However, not all students benefited equally. Learners with weaker digital literacy or limited device access sometimes struggled to participate fully in ICT-mediated tasks. This confirms earlier research indicating that unequal access to technology can reinforce learning disparities unless institutional support mechanisms are provided [21]. Nevertheless, even students facing challenges expressed appreciation for ICT-mediated instruction, suggesting strong motivational benefits.

3.4 Challenges in ICT Implementation

Despite positive outcomes, several challenges affected ICT implementation. The first challenge concerned infrastructure limitations. Internet connectivity was sometimes unstable, and classroom devices were not always available. Teachers often relied on personal laptops or mobile data connections. Such barriers are common in semi-rural educational contexts and remain a significant constraint on sustainable ICT integration [22].

A second challenge was varying levels of teacher digital competence. While some teachers demonstrated strong ICT skills, others lacked confidence and preferred traditional methods. This influenced the depth and frequency of ICT integration. Studies have consistently shown that teacher beliefs, confidence, and technological competence are key determinants of ICT adoption in language learning [23].

A third challenge involved assessment practices. Teachers expressed uncertainty regarding how to systematically evaluate students' speaking performance through ICT-mediated tasks. While video and audio recordings provided rich data, standardized rubrics and institutional assessment policies were limited. This reflects a broader issue in ICT-enhanced education where assessment frameworks often lag behind technological innovation [24].

Finally, some students experienced speaking anxiety when recordings were shared publicly. Although ICT can reduce anxiety in some contexts, it may also create new pressures related to performance visibility. This dual effect is consistent with recent research highlighting that ICT can both support and challenge learners' affective experiences depending on implementation design [25].

3.5 ICT as a Catalyst for Communicative Arabic Learning

The findings indicate that ICT has contributed positively to the development of *mahārah al-kalām* at MTsN Pacitan by increasing opportunities for oral practice, enhancing exposure to authentic input, and encouraging learner engagement. These results support prior research demonstrating that ICT can strengthen oral communication competence in foreign language learning when implemented within structured pedagogical frameworks [26].

More importantly, ICT has played a bridging role between traditional text-oriented Arabic pedagogy and communicative language teaching. In many Islamic schools, Arabic instruction historically emphasized grammar and textual analysis rather than oral interaction. At MTsN Pacitan, ICT provided a pathway toward more communicative practices without displacing the established religious-academic identity of Arabic learning. Teachers were able to incorporate dialogue practice and oral production tasks while maintaining curricular alignment with scriptural and linguistic objectives.

This suggests that ICT integration can support pedagogical reform that is evolutionary rather than disruptive. Rather than demanding wholesale replacement of traditional models, ICT allows incremental innovation whereby teachers strategically integrate communicative tasks into familiar instructional structures. Such gradual reform aligns with the institutional culture of madrasah education and may therefore be more sustainable over time [27].

At the same time, the findings highlight the need for systematic professional development to strengthen teachers' confidence and competence in ICT-enhanced speaking instruction. Without ongoing support, ICT risks remaining at the level of superficial adoption rather than transformative integration. Structured training in task-based pedagogy, digital assessment, and communicative methodology is therefore recommended.

This research contributes to the growing literature on ICT-enhanced Arabic language pedagogy in several ways. First, it provides empirical evidence from an Islamic junior secondary school context, which remains under-represented in existing studies that often focus on universities or urban institutions. Second, the study demonstrates how ICT can facilitate the neglected skill of *mahārah al-kalām*, thereby addressing a long-standing gap between curricular expectations and classroom realities. Third, the research offers a context-sensitive model of hybrid pedagogy, in which ICT complements rather than replaces traditional religious-academic teaching practices.

These contributions have implications for policy and practice. Policymakers should ensure that ICT integration strategies in Islamic education explicitly address oral communication competence, rather than limiting digital transformation to administrative modernization. Schools should strengthen infrastructure, teacher training, and assessment frameworks to support sustained ICT-mediated speaking instruction. Finally, teachers should view ICT not merely as a technological tool, but as a pedagogical resource capable of promoting interaction, autonomy, and communicative competence.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching *mahārah al-kalām* at MTsN Pacitan has contributed significantly to creating a more interactive, student-centered, and communicative learning environment. Through the integration of platforms such as video-conferencing applications, digital learning management systems, and multimedia-based speaking tasks, students were provided with greater opportunities to practice spoken Arabic in authentic and meaningful contexts. These results complement the expectations proposed in the Introduction, namely that ICT can function as both a pedagogical tool and a learning medium that enhances student engagement, oral fluency, and confidence in communication. At the same time, the study revealed several challenges, including limited teacher digital competence, unequal student access to devices and internet connectivity, and the need for structured ICT-based speaking task design.

In light of these findings, future development of ICT-supported *mahārah al-kalām* instruction should focus on strengthening teacher professional training, improving digital infrastructure in *madrasah*, and designing systematic speaking-oriented learning models that integrate multimedia, collaboration, and formative assessment. Further research may explore the long-term impact of ICT on Arabic oral proficiency development, comparative effectiveness across different educational settings, or the role of artificial intelligence-based language tools in supporting pronunciation, feedback, and learner autonomy. Thus, ICT implementation in Arabic speaking instruction at MTsN Pacitan not only offers pedagogical innovation but also opens new horizons for the modernization of Arabic language education in Islamic secondary schools.

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