

Self-Speaking Challenge Strategy Through Social Media in Enhancing Mahārah Al-Kalām

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the role of the social media-based self-speaking challenge in improving the Arabic speaking skills (mahārah al-kalām) of Arabic Language Education students. The background of this research lies in the fact that speaking is often the most challenging skill, due to both limited vocabulary and low self-confidence. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach with data collected through video observation, comment analysis, and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that the self-speaking challenge enhanced students' fluency, vocabulary variation, and sentence structure mastery. Furthermore, the strategy significantly fostered self-confidence and reduced students' anxiety or shyness in speaking Arabic in digital public spaces. Audience comments functioned both as motivational support and as peer linguistic feedback that strengthened the learning process. The novelty of this study lies in its identification of the dual function of audience comments as both affective support and linguistic peer feedback, a dimension that has received limited attention in previous studies on social media-based Arabic language learning. The study concludes that social media can serve as a dynamic pedagogical space, rather than merely an entertainment platform, with significant contributions to the development of Arabic speaking skills.*

Keywords: *Arabic Language Learning, Mahārah Al-Kalām, Self-Confidence, Self-Speaking Challenge, Social Media*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran strategi self-speaking challenge berbasis media sosial dalam meningkatkan mahārah al-kalām mahasiswa Bahasa Arab. Latar belakang penelitian ini berangkat dari kenyataan bahwa keterampilan berbicara sering menjadi tantangan utama, baik karena keterbatasan kosakata maupun rendahnya kepercayaan diri mahasiswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi video unggahan mahasiswa, analisis komentar audiens, serta wawancara mendalam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa self-speaking challenge mendorong peningkatan kelancaran berbicara, variasi kosakata, serta penguasaan struktur kalimat. Selain itu, strategi ini juga menumbuhkan rasa percaya diri dan mengurangi rasa malu mahasiswa ketika berbicara bahasa Arab di ruang publik digital. Komentar audiens berfungsi ganda sebagai dukungan motivasional dan peer feedback linguistik yang memperkuat proses belajar. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada identifikasi fungsi ganda komentar audiens sebagai dukungan afektif sekaligus umpan balik linguistik antarteman (peer feedback), yang masih jarang dianalisis dalam penelitian pembelajaran bahasa Arab berbasis media sosial. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa media sosial dapat diposisikan sebagai ruang pedagogis dinamis, bukan sekadar sarana hiburan, dengan kontribusi signifikan dalam membangun keterampilan berbicara bahasa Arab.

Kata Kunci : Kepercayaan diri, Mahārah al-kalām, Media sosial, Pembelajaran bahasa Arab, Self-speaking challenge.



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INTRODUCTION

Speaking skills constitute one of the primary pillars in foreign language learning. In the context of both English and Arabic, speaking (*mahārah al-kalām*) occupies a highly important position because it serves as a key indicator of communicative competence [1], [2]. However, numerous studies indicate that many learners experience difficulties in speaking, particularly related to low self-confidence, tendencies toward anxiety, and the lack of a supportive language environment [3], [4]. This condition results in language learning outcomes that are often not proportional to the practical skills acquired by students, especially in terms of oral communication fluency.

In the literature on language learning strategies, the concepts of self-talk and self-challenge have emerged as methods for strengthening speaking skills [5]. An autobiographical narrative study conducted in the context of English language learning demonstrated that self-talk practices can enhance self-confidence, reduce anxiety, and improve speaking performance through motivational and cognitive reinforcement [6]. Consistent self-reflection helps learners organize their thoughts, practice language structures, and provide positive reinforcement during speaking activities. This finding confirms that self-challenge-based strategies possess strong relevance in fostering language confidence [7].

Along with the development of digital technology, social media has become a new space for students to express themselves while simultaneously practicing language skills. Data indicate an 85.5% rate of gadget usage among young people, including university students, the majority of whom utilize platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram for daily activities [8]. This trend presents opportunities for Arabic language students to engage in self-speaking challenges, namely independent and consistent Arabic speaking practices through uploading content on social media [9]. This practice enables students to be exposed to authentic Arabic language input, interact with learning communities, and receive continuous feedback [10], [11].

A number of studies indicate that the utilization of social media in Arabic language learning has a positive impact on enhancing motivation, interaction, and language habits. Social media not only provides extensive learning resources but also creates a contextual, collaborative, and interactive learning environment [12], [13]. For instance, the use of YouTube to present conversation examples, TikTok for short monologue practice, and Instagram for sharing conversation recordings has been proven effective in improving speaking skills [14], [15]. Thus, social media can be viewed as a digital ecosystem that supports self-speaking challenge strategies [16], [2].

A growing body of research has demonstrated the positive role of social media in Arabic language learning. Previous studies have shown that platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube can enhance learner engagement, motivation, and opportunities for authentic language practice [4], [7]. Furthermore, social media enables students to participate in contextual and interactive learning experiences that extend beyond classroom boundaries. Studies on Instagram and YouTube have reported improvements in speaking performance, vocabulary development, and learner participation through content creation and project-based activities [10], [14]. Similarly, TikTok-based learning activities have been found to facilitate students' confidence and speaking practice in Arabic [11]. Therefore, social media can be viewed as a digital learning ecosystem that supports the development of speaking skills through authentic communication and continuous interaction.

From a theoretical perspective, the implementation of self-speaking challenges through social media can be explained through three complementary frameworks. First, Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory posits that individuals' beliefs in their capabilities influence

their motivation, persistence, and performance in specific tasks [17]. In language learning, repeated speaking practice accompanied by positive audience responses may strengthen learners' confidence and willingness to communicate in Arabic. Second, Knowles' Self-Directed Learning Theory emphasizes learners' autonomy in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own learning activities [18]. The self-speaking challenge reflects this principle by encouraging students to independently initiate and sustain Arabic speaking practice beyond formal classroom instruction. Third, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis suggests that language acquisition is more effective when learners experience lower levels of anxiety and greater self-confidence [19]. Supportive interactions and constructive feedback received through social media may help reduce affective barriers, thereby creating favorable conditions for the development of *mahārah al-kalām*. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a conceptual foundation for understanding how self-speaking challenges can facilitate both linguistic and affective development in Arabic language learning.

Previous studies have demonstrated the potential of social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube in supporting Arabic language learning, particularly in increasing learner engagement, motivation, vocabulary acquisition, and speaking practice [4], [7], [20]. However, most of these studies primarily examine social media as a medium for content consumption or general language practice. Limited attention has been paid to self-speaking challenge activities that require learners to actively produce Arabic content on a regular basis and share it publicly through social media. Moreover, the role of audience comments as a source of both affective support and linguistic peer feedback remains underexplored in the context of Arabic language learning.

Based on this gap, the present study investigates the implementation of social media-based self-speaking challenge strategies in enhancing students' *mahārah al-kalām*. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the integration of self-directed speaking practices, public digital participation, and audience interaction within a single learning activity. Specifically, this study explores how audience comments function not only as motivational support but also as linguistic peer feedback that contributes to speaking development. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) How are self-speaking challenges implemented by Arabic Language Education students through social media platforms? (2) How do self-speaking challenges contribute to the development of students' *mahārah al-kalām* in both linguistic and affective dimensions? (3) How do audience comments function as motivational support and peer linguistic feedback within the learning process?

METHODS

1. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design with a content analysis approach to investigate the implementation of social media-based self-speaking challenge strategies in enhancing students' *mahārah al-kalām*. The qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of students' experiences, perceptions, and responses within authentic learning contexts [21]. Content analysis was utilized to examine various forms of digital content, including videos, audience comments, and interview data, in order to identify patterns of language use, participation, and speaking development [22].

2. Participants and Research Setting

The study involved ten students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program who actively participated in a self-speaking challenge on social media. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on three criteria: (1) actively participating in self-speaking challenge activities, (2) uploading Arabic-speaking videos on social media platforms,

and (3) being willing to participate in interviews. The participants came from different classes within the study program to provide diverse learning experiences.

Table 1. Profile of Research Participants

Participant	Platform	Videos Uploaded
P1	TikTok	3
P2	Instagram	3
P3	TikTok	3
P4	Instagram	3
P5	TikTok	3
P6	Instagram	3
P7	TikTok	3
P8	Instagram	3
P9	TikTok	3
P10	Instagram	3
Total	-	30 Videos

The self-speaking challenge was conducted over a two-week period through TikTok and Instagram. During the activity, students consistently uploaded Arabic-speaking videos as part of their independent speaking practice. A total of thirty videos were collected and analyzed as the primary data source. The research setting was virtual, focusing on students' social media accounts where Arabic-speaking practices and audience interactions occurred.

3. Data Collection

Data were collected through three complementary techniques. First, video observations were conducted on thirty Arabic-speaking videos uploaded by ten participants on TikTok and Instagram during the two-week self-speaking challenge. The observations focused on speaking fluency, vocabulary use, sentence structure, pronunciation, and consistency of speaking practice. Through this technique, the researcher assessed the development of students' speaking abilities based on their actual online performances [23].

Second, audience comments posted on the uploaded videos were analyzed to identify forms of motivational support, linguistic feedback, and audience engagement. A total of 135 audience comments were collected and analyzed. These comments served as supplementary data for understanding how social interaction and feedback contributed to students' speaking development and learning experiences.

Third, in-depth interviews were conducted with all ten participants through WhatsApp. The interviews explored students' motivations for participating in the challenge, their experiences of speaking Arabic in public digital spaces, the challenges they encountered, and the perceived impact of the activity on their speaking skills and self-confidence. The interview data were subsequently used to confirm and enrich the findings obtained from video observations and comment analysis [9].

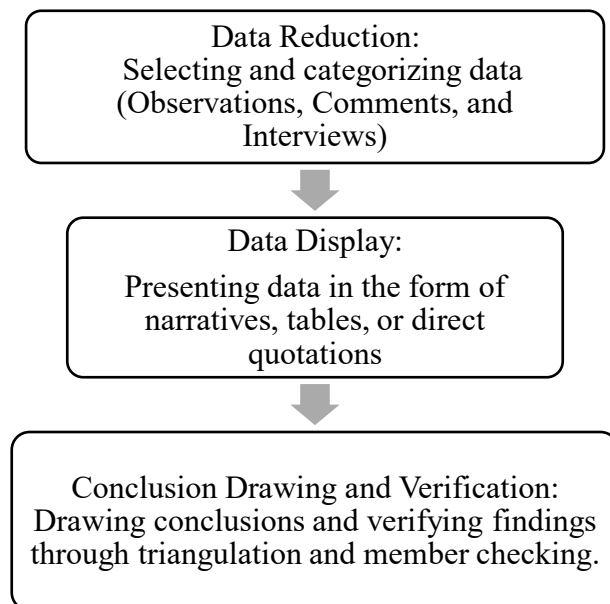
By integrating these three techniques, the study generated rich and comprehensive data that not only described students' speaking performance but also revealed the affective and social dimensions underlying their learning experiences.

4. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification [24]. During the data reduction stage, information obtained from videos, comments, and interviews

was selected, coded, and categorized into several themes, including speaking fluency, vocabulary development, self-confidence, motivation, and audience feedback. The categorized data were then displayed in the form of narratives, tables, and illustrative quotations to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and relationships across the three data sources and were continuously verified throughout the analysis process [25].

Figure 1. Illustrates the Data Analysis Flow using the Miles and Huberman Model:



To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation and member checking were employed. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from video observations, audience comments, and interview data. Member checking was carried out by sharing interview summaries and interpretations with participants to confirm the accuracy of the findings and ensure that the reported results reflected their actual experiences [26].

Prior to participation, all students were informed about the objectives and procedures of the study. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained for the use of interview responses, uploaded videos, and audience comments for research purposes. To maintain confidentiality, participants were anonymized using identification codes (P1–P10), and all personal information was removed from the research records. The collected data were used solely for academic purposes and were reported in a manner that protected participants' privacy and identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

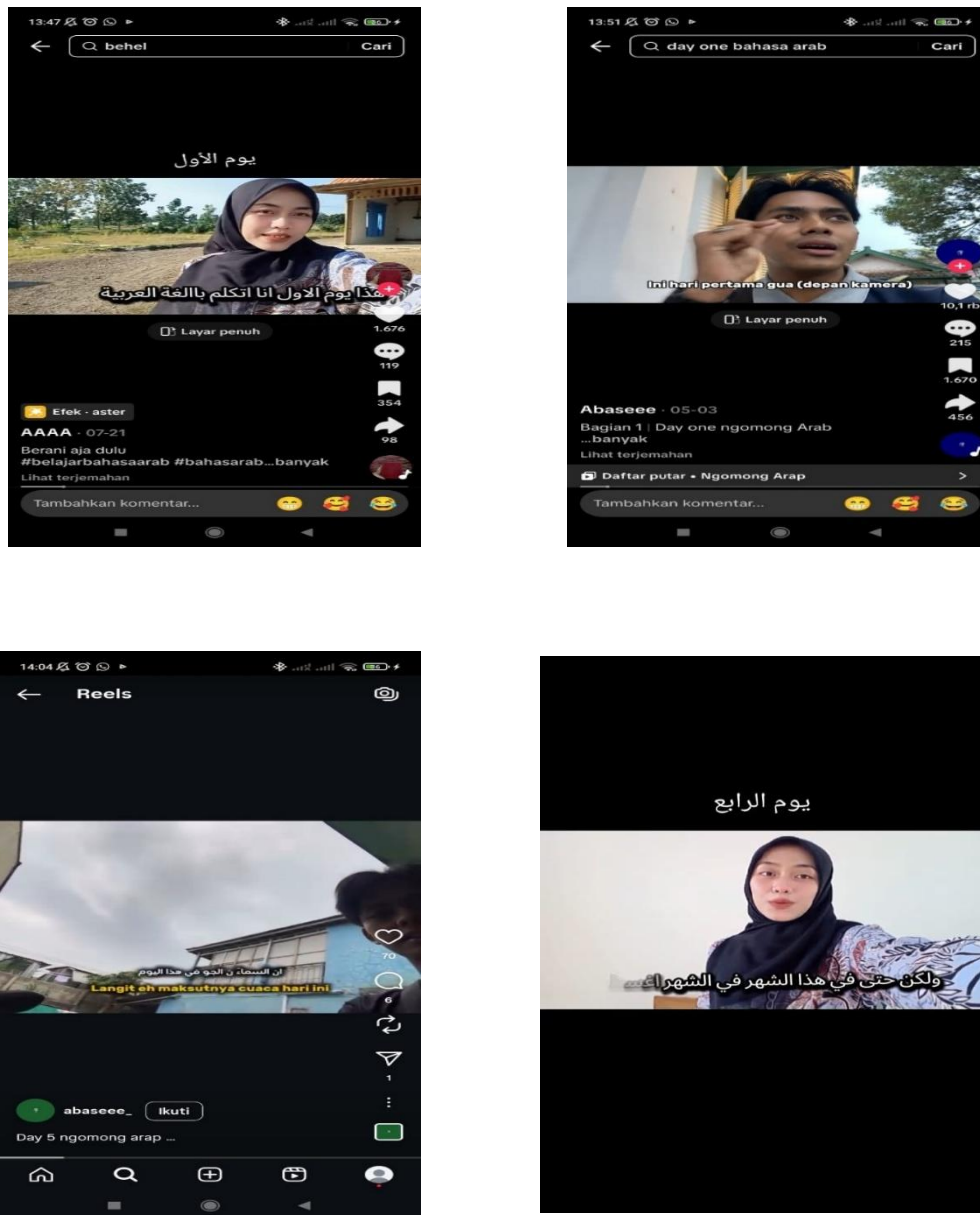
Based on the results of observations of students' uploaded videos implementing self-speaking challenges on social media, as well as analyses of comments left by audiences, several important findings were obtained regarding the contribution of this strategy to improving students' *mahārah al-kalām*.

1. Consistency in Speaking Practice

Videos uploaded consistently demonstrate the development of students' speaking skills. At the initial stage, several participants exhibited rigid pronunciation and were limited to simple sentence structures. However, as the number of uploads increased, improvements became evident in speaking fluency, confidence in using new vocabulary, and mastery of

sentence structures [27]. This can be observed through comparisons between videos from the first day and those from subsequent days, in which students appeared more expressive and self-confident.

Figure 2. (Speaking practice)



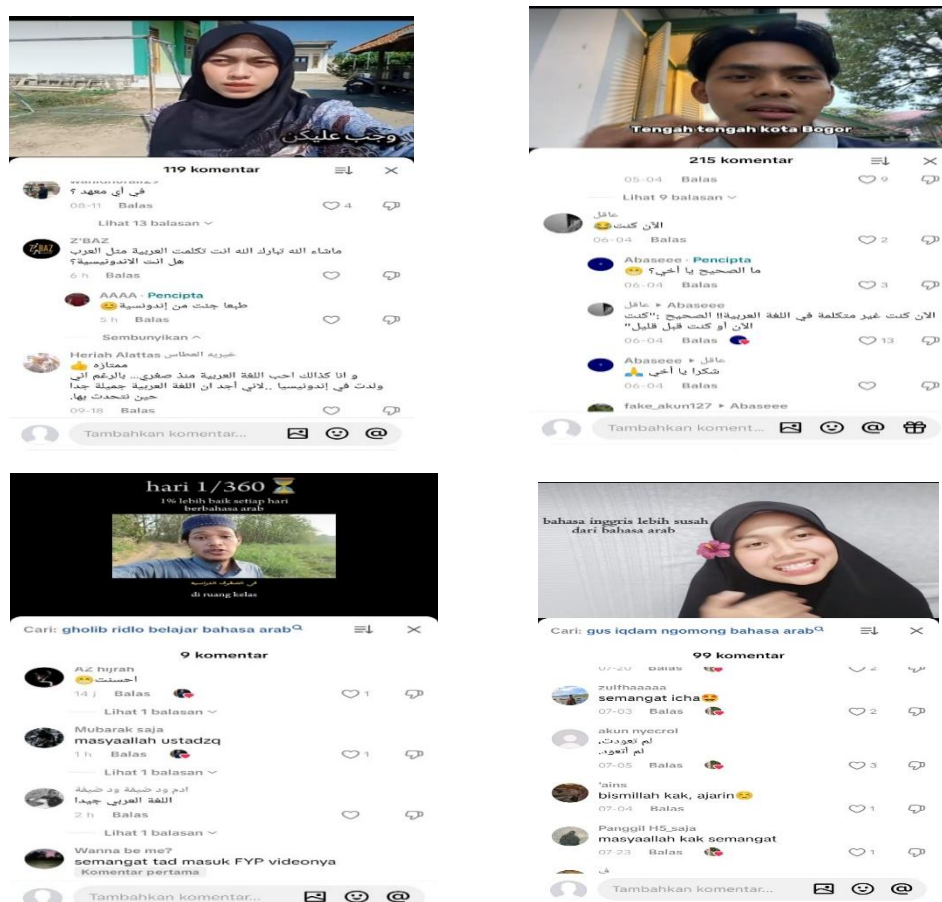
2. Social Support and Improvement through Comments

Most comments from audiences were positive and supportive in nature. Expressions such as “أحسنّت” (“bagus”), “ما شاء الله” (“māshā' Allāh”), and “ممتازة” (“excellent”), as well as various other comments, reflected appreciation for students’ efforts in using the Arabic language. In addition, some comments provided direct corrections regarding language use, such as improving sentence structures or suggesting more appropriate diction. This indicates that social media functions not only as a space for self-expression but also as a medium for constructive peer feedback for language learners[28].

Table 2. (Distribution of Audience Comment Categories)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Motivational Support	74	54.8%
Linguistic Corrections	38	28.1%
Neutral Responses	17	12.6%
Negative Responses	6	4.5%
Total	135	100%

As shown in Table 2, motivational support constituted the largest category of audience responses (54.8%), followed by linguistic corrections (28.1%). These findings indicate that audience comments functioned not only as affective encouragement but also as a source of peer linguistic feedback that supported students' speaking development.

Figure 3. (Comments from Viewers/Audiences)

3. Increased Motivation and Self-Confidence

Table 3. (Themes Emerging from Interview Data)

Theme	Participants (n)	Example Finding
Increased Self-Confidence	9	Students became more willing to speak publicly
Consistency in Practice	8	Students practiced Arabic daily
Reduced Anxiety	7	Fear of making mistakes gradually decreased

Vocabulary Development	6	Students searched for new words before recording
Social Support	8	Positive comments encouraged continued participation

As presented in Table 3, increased self-confidence emerged as the most frequently reported theme, mentioned by nine out of ten participants. Interviews with students revealed that, at the beginning of the self-speaking challenge, many of them felt nervous and lacked self-confidence when speaking Arabic in front of a camera. However, repeated participation in the challenge gradually helped them overcome these feelings. In addition, eight participants reported that the activity encouraged greater consistency in speaking practice, while seven participants acknowledged experiencing reduced anxiety when communicating in Arabic. Six participants indicated that they expanded their vocabulary repertoire by searching for new words and expressions before recording videos, and eight participants emphasized the importance of audience support in sustaining their motivation. The support provided by audiences through comments, combined with repeated speaking experiences, encouraged students to become more confident in expressing themselves. One participant stated:

“At first I felt embarrassed to upload Arabic-speaking videos because I was afraid of making mistakes. However, after receiving supportive comments from friends and viewers, I became more confident and motivated to continue practicing” (P3).

Similarly, another participant explained:

“The challenge encouraged me to learn new vocabulary before recording. I often searched for appropriate expressions because I wanted my speech to sound more natural and understandable” (P7).

These findings indicate that the self-speaking challenge not only improved students' speaking practice but also fostered psychological and motivational development, particularly in terms of self-confidence, persistence, and willingness to communicate in Arabic within digital learning environments [29].

4. Challenges and Obstacles

Despite the positive outcomes, the study also identified several challenges faced by students. First, limited vocabulary often caused them to pause momentarily or repeat words in their videos. Second, some students admitted that they still felt embarrassed when their videos were viewed by many people, especially their peers. Third, technical issues, such as unstable internet connections, also affected the quality of video uploads [2].

5. The Impact on the Mastery of *Mahārah al-Kalām*

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that social media-based self-speaking challenges contribute significantly to the improvement of students' speaking skills. This improvement is reflected not only in linguistic aspects, such as vocabulary and sentence structure, but also in affective aspects, including courage, motivation, and self-confidence. Social interaction through comments further strengthens the positive effects of this strategy, as students receive both appreciation and relevant feedback [30].

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

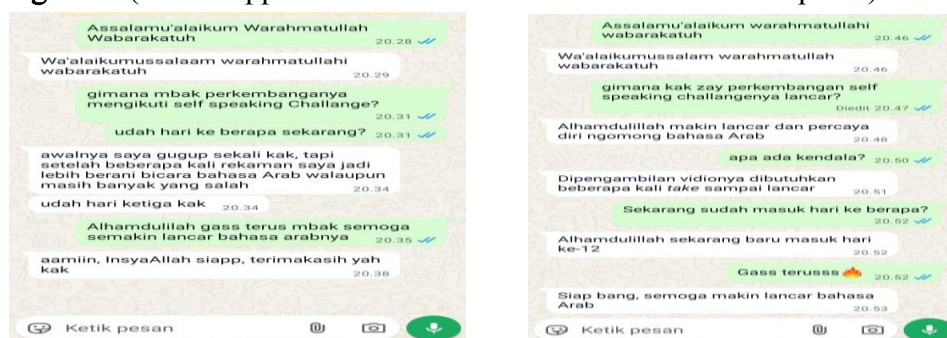
This study reveals that social media-based self-speaking challenge strategies contribute significantly to improving the speaking skills (*mahārah al-kalām*) of students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program. Video observations indicate that participants who consistently uploaded speaking recordings experienced improvements in fluency,

vocabulary variation and acquisition, as well as intonation. Furthermore, analyses of comments and interviews confirm that social support and audience feedback serve as important factors in fostering students' motivation and self-confidence in using spoken Arabic. These findings are consistent with the study by Hilmi et al, (2024), which emphasizes that social media, particularly TikTok, is capable of increasing students' participation in Arabic language practice [4]. However, unlike that study, which focused on content consumption, the present study emphasizes active production through self-speaking challenges. This indicates a shift from passive learning behavior toward more active and independent speaking practices. These findings also complement the study by Sabri & Nasruddin, (2023), which highlighted the combination of digital and non-digital media, by extending the discussion to the role of social interaction in supporting students' confidence in speaking [31].

The novelty of this study lies not only in examining self-speaking challenges as a form of self-directed Arabic speaking practice but also in demonstrating the dual role of audience comments as both affective support and linguistic peer feedback. As indicated in the analysis of 135 audience comments, learners received encouragement, corrective feedback, and vocabulary suggestions that contributed to their speaking development. While previous studies have primarily emphasized social media as a medium for content exposure and language practice, the present study highlights how audience engagement functions as an active component of the learning process. These findings suggest that online interaction can simultaneously support learners' psychological readiness and linguistic improvement, thereby enriching the Arabic language learning experience. In addition, interviews with students revealed a strong affective dimension. Many participants admitted that, at the beginning, they felt nervous and embarrassed to speak in front of the camera [32]. However, over time, these feelings gradually diminished and were replaced by greater self-confidence.

These findings can also be interpreted through Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory [33]. Repeated speaking practice and positive audience responses appeared to strengthen students' beliefs in their ability to communicate in Arabic. As learners experienced successful speaking performances and received encouraging feedback, their confidence increased, leading to greater persistence in engaging with Arabic speaking activities. The gradual transition from nervousness to confidence reported by participants reflects the development of self-efficacy through repeated mastery experiences and social reinforcement. The reduction of nervousness and embarrassment among participants is also consistent with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis [19]. Supportive interactions and constructive feedback received through social media may have lowered learners' affective filters, thereby facilitating more effective language acquisition and oral performance. When students felt less anxious about making mistakes, they became more willing to participate in speaking activities and experiment with new vocabulary and expressions. Representative excerpts from the WhatsApp interviews further illustrate participants' experiences during the self-speaking challenge.

Figure 4. (WhatsApp-Based Interviews with Research Participants)



The interview results indicate positive development through the self-speaking challenge. One participant admitted becoming more fluent and confident in speaking Arabic after consistently participating in the challenge for twelve days, although multiple retakes were often required. Meanwhile, another participant also experienced a transformation from nervousness to greater confidence in speaking, despite still making mistakes [34]. The participant stated, “*Awalnya saya gugup sekali, tapi setelah beberapa kali rekaman, saya jadi lebih berani bicara Arab walau masih banyak salah.*” This finding is consistent with Self-Directed Learning Theory [18], which emphasizes learners’ responsibility for planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own learning activities. The self-speaking challenge encouraged students to independently prepare speaking materials, search for vocabulary, practice pronunciation, and evaluate their recorded performances before uploading them to social media. Such practices demonstrate the development of autonomous learning behaviors that extend beyond formal classroom instruction [35].

The findings of this study also support the constructivist approach, which positions students as active agents in the learning process. The social interaction established through audience comments reinforces collaborative learning, in line with the findings of Zainuddin & Yunus, (2022) and Tripathi et al, (2021) regarding the importance of social engagement in improving communication skills [36], [37]. However, this study simultaneously challenges traditional views that regard social media merely as a source of entertainment. On the contrary, social media has proven to function as a dynamic pedagogical space that facilitates contextual Arabic language learning.

The implications of this study indicate that social media-based self-speaking challenge strategies can be integrated into the *mahārah al-kalām* curriculum in higher education. Lecturers may design project-based assignments, such as creating short videos or Arabic-language vlogs, which can then be assessed using speaking skill rubrics [9]. This model is aligned with contextual learning theory which emphasizes that learning experiences connected to real-life contexts possess higher retention value [38]. Therefore, this study not only strengthens the theoretical foundation of social media-based Arabic language learning but also offers practical contributions to the development of learning strategies in the digital era.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study demonstrates that social media-based self-speaking challenge strategies contribute positively to the development of students’ *mahārah al-kalām*. The findings indicate that consistent participation in self-speaking challenges through platforms such as TikTok and Instagram enhances speaking fluency, vocabulary use, sentence construction, and overall confidence in Arabic oral communication. Beyond linguistic development, the study also highlights important affective outcomes, including increased self-confidence, reduced speaking anxiety, and stronger motivation to engage in Arabic speaking activities.

A significant contribution of this study lies in revealing the dual role of audience comments as both affective support and linguistic peer feedback. Audience interactions not only encouraged students to continue practicing but also provided corrective feedback and vocabulary suggestions that contributed to speaking improvement. This finding extends existing research by demonstrating that audience engagement functions as an active component of the language learning process rather than merely a response to students’ online activities. The findings further suggest that social media can serve as a dynamic pedagogical space that promotes self-directed, collaborative, and contextual language learning. Therefore, integrating self-speaking challenge activities into *mahārah al-kalām* instruction may provide meaningful opportunities for students to practice Arabic beyond the classroom while developing greater learner autonomy and communicative competence. This study is limited

by its relatively small number of participants and its focus on a single study program. Future studies may involve larger and more diverse participant groups, employ longitudinal designs, or compare different social media platforms to obtain a broader understanding of the effectiveness of self-speaking challenge strategies in Arabic language learning.

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