



## Improving Speaking Skills Through the Use of YouTube "Arabic Podcast" Among Graduate Students of Higher Education

Zair Idrisa<sup>1\*</sup>, Umi Machmudah<sup>2</sup>, Penny Respati Yurisa<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

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### Abstract:

Speaking skill development in Arabic learning often faces challenges related to anxiety, limited practice opportunities, and lack of exposure to authentic spoken language. This study aims to explore graduate students' lived experiences in using YouTube Arabic Podcasts for developing *maharah kalam*. Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study involved graduate students as participants, with data collected through in-depth interviews and classroom observations and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that students experience YouTube Arabic Podcasts as a flexible and learner-controlled medium that supports autonomous speaking practice. Repeated exposure to authentic pronunciation and intonation reduces speaking anxiety, enhances confidence, and gradually improves fluency. Students also demonstrate a shift in speaking orientation, prioritizing meaning-making over grammatical perfection. The novelty of this study lies in its phenomenological insight into the psychological and experiential dimensions of podcast-based Arabic speaking learning. The findings imply that integrating Arabic podcasts into speaking instruction can foster a more communicative, confidence-oriented, and learner-centered approach to *maharah kalam* development.

**Keywords:** Arabic Podcast, *Maharah kalam*, Speaking Confidence, Phenomenological Study

### Abstrak:

Pengembangan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Arab sering menghadapi tantangan berupa kecemasan, keterbatasan kesempatan praktik, dan minimnya paparan bahasa lisan yang autentik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman hidup mahasiswa pascasarjana dalam menggunakan YouTube Arabic Podcast untuk pengembangan *maharah kalam*. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif fenomenologis dengan melibatkan mahasiswa pascasarjana sebagai partisipan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi pembelajaran, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memaknai YouTube Arabic Podcast sebagai media pembelajaran yang fleksibel dan berpusat pada pembelajaran, yang mendukung praktik berbicara secara mandiri. Paparan berulang terhadap tuturan autentik menurunkan kecemasan berbicara, meningkatkan kepercayaan diri, dan memperbaiki kelancaran berbicara. Selain itu, mahasiswa mengalami pergeseran fokus dari ketepatan tata bahasa menuju penyampaian makna. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada pemahaman fenomenologis terhadap dimensi psikologis dan pengalaman belajar berbicara berbasis podcast. Temuan ini merekomendasikan integrasi podcast sebagai strategi pembelajaran berbicara yang lebih komunikatif dan berorientasi pada pembelajaran.

**Kata Kunci:** Podcast Bahasa Arab, *Maharah kalam*, Kepercayaan Diri Berbicara, Studi Fenomenologis

\*Corresponding author

Email: 230104220036@student.uin-malang.ac.id

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## INTRODUCTION / المقدمة

Language plays a crucial role in shaping human interaction, knowledge transmission, and cultural continuity. In contemporary society, effective oral communication skills are increasingly essential, particularly in academic and professional contexts. Speaking ability enables individuals to articulate ideas, negotiate meaning, and participate actively in global discourse (Almoayad et al., 2024; Mokadem et al., 2022; Zeid et al., 2023). For learners of Arabic as a foreign language, speaking competence (*maharah kalam*) is not merely a linguistic skill but also a gateway to accessing religious, cultural, and intellectual traditions. However, traditional language instruction often emphasizes grammatical accuracy over communicative competence, resulting in limited speaking proficiency. Empirical evidence indicates that learners exposed to authentic and contextualized language input tend to develop stronger oral skills than those relying solely on textbook-based instruction. Therefore, innovative pedagogical approaches that integrate technology and authentic media are urgently needed (Baharun et al., 2020; Ismail et al., 2023). This study is important for society because it addresses the growing demand for effective, flexible, and engaging Arabic language learning models that align with digital transformation and lifelong learning needs.

Despite the growing importance of speaking skills, many Arabic language learners experience persistent difficulties in developing *maharah kalam*. These challenges stem from several interconnected problems, including limited exposure to authentic spoken Arabic, lack of interactive learning environments, and anxiety associated with oral performance. In higher education contexts, learning activities often prioritize reading and writing skills, while speaking practice remains minimal and highly structured (El Ouahabi et al., 2023; Wesely et al., 2024). Consequently, graduate students may possess theoretical knowledge of Arabic grammar yet struggle to express ideas fluently and confidently. Furthermore, conventional teaching methods frequently fail to accommodate diverse learning styles and technological habits of contemporary learners. This mismatch between pedagogical approaches and students' digital realities contributes to low motivation and limited communicative competence (Kharlanova et al., 2024; Olmos & Mendoza, 2023). As society increasingly relies on digital communication platforms, the inability to speak effectively in a second language becomes a significant educational and social problem that necessitates alternative instructional strategies.

Previous studies have explored the role of YouTube in language learning and reported positive outcomes. Musthofa (2021) and Damayanti (2024) found that YouTube enhances learners' comprehension of Arabic vocabulary and pronunciation through repeated exposure. Bechir et al. (2024), Alsharif (2025), and Sofi et al. (2025) emphasized YouTube's potential as an engaging learning medium that increases students' motivation and autonomy. Alkadi et al. (2025) and Almutawa (2023) demonstrated that YouTube-based instruction contributes to improved speaking confidence and fluency among Arabic learners. Rizqia et al. (2024), Öberg (2022), and Mashaqba et al. (2020) highlighted YouTube's accessibility and flexibility as key factors supporting language acquisition. Although these studies confirm the pedagogical value of YouTube, most focus on general language skills or beginner learners and rely primarily on descriptive or perception-based data. Few studies specifically examine speaking skills in higher education contexts using structured Arabic podcast content as a primary learning medium.

While existing research acknowledges YouTube as an effective learning tool, several limitations remain. First, previous studies rarely concentrate on *maharah kalam* as a distinct and complex skill requiring interaction, fluency, and communicative competence. Second, the majority of studies do not analyze specific content formats, such as Arabic podcasts, that integrate authentic speech, discourse patterns, and translation strategies. Akhoirsheda (2025) and Albahli (2022) discussed translation techniques in Arabic podcasts but did not link them directly to speaking skill development. Additionally, limited attention has been given to graduate students, whose cognitive and academic needs differ significantly from those of beginner learners. As a result, there is a clear research gap regarding how YouTube-based Arabic podcasts function pedagogically to improve speaking skills at the higher education level. Addressing this gap is essential to advance technology-enhanced Arabic language pedagogy.

This study offers a novel contribution by specifically examining the use of the YouTube “Arabic Podcast” channel as a pedagogical medium for developing *maharah kalam* among graduate students. Unlike previous research that treats YouTube as a supplementary resource, this study positions Arabic podcasts as a structured learning tool that integrates authentic spoken input, translation techniques, and contextual explanations (Anis et al., 2022; Hejazi, 2021). The novelty lies in analyzing how podcast-based content supports speaking development by reducing anxiety, increasing exposure to natural language use, and encouraging autonomous practice. Furthermore, this research responds to contemporary educational demands by aligning Arabic language instruction with digital learning trends (Ahsanuddin et al., 2020; Hanaqtah, 2022). By focusing on higher education learners and speaking skills, this study advances the state of the art in Arabic language pedagogy and provides an evidence-based framework for integrating podcasts into formal instruction.

Based on the issues identified, this study addresses the central problem of how YouTube-based Arabic podcasts can be utilized effectively to enhance *maharah kalam* among graduate students. The main argument of this research is that Arabic podcasts on YouTube provide authentic linguistic input, flexible access, and supportive learning environments that facilitate speaking skill development. Through repeated listening, imitation, and contextual understanding, learners can improve pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. This study assumes that technology-mediated learning, when properly integrated, can overcome psychological and linguistic barriers commonly faced by learners. Therefore, examining the pedagogical mechanisms of Arabic podcasts is essential to understanding their role in speaking skill acquisition.

The originality of this study lies in its focused analysis of the Arabic Podcast YouTube channel as a learning medium for *maharah kalam* in higher education. This research contributes theoretically by enriching discussions on digital pedagogy and speaking skill development in Arabic language education. Practically, it offers insights for lecturers and curriculum designers on how to integrate podcast-based learning into speaking instruction. By highlighting the instructional potential of Arabic podcasts, this study provides an alternative solution to traditional teaching limitations and supports the development of more interactive, learner-centered, and technology-driven Arabic language learning models.

## RESEARCH METHOD / المنهجية

This study adopts a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach. The qualitative design was selected because the research aims to explore, understand, and interpret participants' lived experiences in depth rather than to measure variables quantitatively (Kohn, 2024). A phenomenological approach is particularly appropriate as it focuses on how individuals perceive, experience, and make meaning of a specific phenomenon in this case, the utilization of the YouTube "Arabic Podcast" channel to improve *maharah kalam*. This approach allows the researcher to capture students' subjective experiences, learning processes, and perceived impacts of digital media on speaking skill development, which cannot be adequately explained through numerical data alone.

The research was conducted at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, a higher education institution that actively integrates Arabic language instruction with digital learning practices. The location was chosen for three main reasons: (1) the university has a graduate-level Arabic Language Education program, (2) students are accustomed to using digital platforms as supplementary learning tools, and (3) preliminary observations indicated the use of YouTube, particularly Arabic podcasts, in speaking practice. The research informants consisted of 17 graduate students from the Arabic Language Education program, class of 2024. These students were selected purposively because they were actively engaged in Arabic language learning and had experience using YouTube as part of their learning activities. In addition, learning materials from the Arabic Podcast YouTube channel were included as supporting data sources.

Data were collected using three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation (Rahmanidar, 2023). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain detailed information about students' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in using YouTube to improve *maharah kalam*. Observation was carried out during learning activities to examine how students interact with Arabic podcast content, practice speaking skills, and apply what they learn in real communicative contexts. Documentation included learning notes, course-related materials, screenshots, and selected video content from the Arabic Podcast channel, which provided tangible evidence of YouTube utilization in the learning process.

Data analysis followed a systematic qualitative procedure consisting of data condensation, data reduction, data display, and data verification (Sali, 2020). Data condensation involved selecting and focusing on relevant information related to YouTube utilization and speaking skill development. Data reduction was conducted by organizing and categorizing interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation to identify recurring themes and patterns. Data display was presented in the form of narrative descriptions and thematic matrices to facilitate interpretation. Finally, data verification involved drawing conclusions and continuously comparing findings across data sources to ensure consistency and accuracy.

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the data, this study employed several techniques, including triangulation of data sources and methods, prolonged engagement, and member checking. Triangulation was achieved by comparing data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking was conducted by confirming key findings with selected participants to ensure that the interpretations

accurately reflected their experiences. These procedures strengthened the credibility and reliability of the research findings.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION / نتائج البحث و المناقشة**

### **Finding**

This section presents the findings of the study derived from in-depth interviews and observations of postgraduate students' experiences in using YouTube Arabic Podcasts for *maharah kalam* learning. The findings are organized into thematic sub-sections that reflect students' lived experiences, perceived impacts on speaking confidence and fluency, and the role of digital podcast media in shaping learner-centered Arabic speaking development.

#### **Students' Lived Experiences in Using YouTube Arabic Podcast for *Maharah kalam***

This sub-finding refers to the direct experiences of postgraduate students using YouTube Arabic Podcasts as a learning medium to develop their mastery of kalam. In the field context, these experiences include how students interact with podcast content, their perceptions of the learning environment created, and the meanings they construct during the learning process. YouTube Arabic Podcasts are understood as an alternative learning space that allows students to practice speaking independently, repeatedly, and flexibly, without the pressure of evaluation that often occurs in formal classroom oral learning.

One informant revealed that using Arabic Podcasts provides a sense of security in practicing speaking because there is no fear of making mistakes. The informant stated, "When speaking in class, I often feel anxious because I'm afraid of making mistakes. But when learning through Arabic Podcasts on YouTube, I can replay the videos repeatedly and practice on my own until I feel confident." This statement indicates that podcasts act as a non-threatening learning space that helps students reduce speaking anxiety. The researcher interprets the ability to control the pace of learning and repeat material as a key factor in fostering confidence in speaking Arabic.

Another informant emphasized the flexibility of using YouTube Arabic Podcasts. He stated, "I can learn anytime and anywhere. If I don't understand a particular conversation, I just replay it until I fully understand it before trying to speak." This data indicates that flexibility in time and place is an important experience for students in understanding the process of learning to speak. The researcher interprets this freedom of access as allowing students to gradually build language understanding, allowing for a more natural internalization of spoken expressions before practicing them verbally.

Observations indicate that students actively utilize the replay, pause, and speed adjustment features when interacting with Arabic Podcast content. Some students were seen imitating the speaker's pronunciation, noting new vocabulary, and practicing dialogues verbally after watching the video. The researcher interprets this pattern as indicating active student involvement in the speaking learning process. In other words, students are not merely passive spectators but act as learners who consciously construct their speaking skills through repeated interaction with podcast content.

Overall, the data demonstrates a pattern of independent, flexible, and pressure-free learning experiences. Students perceive the YouTube Arabic Podcast as a safe space to experiment with speaking Arabic, where mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process. This pattern demonstrates that the podcast learning experience fosters speaking

confidence, increases active engagement, and gradually builds self-confidence. Thus, students' experiences using the YouTube Arabic Podcast form an important foundation for developing a more natural and learner-oriented language flow.

### Perceived Impact on Speaking Confidence and Fluency

This sub-theme describes students' perceived impact on the development of speaking confidence and fluency after regularly engaging with YouTube Arabic Podcast. The impact is understood as a transformation in students' internal experiences, including reduced fear of speaking, increased willingness to express ideas orally, and a sense of speaking more smoothly and naturally. In the field context, speaking confidence and fluency are not measured numerically but are interpreted through students' subjective experiences when interacting with podcast content and when practicing Arabic speaking in various learning situations.

Interview data indicate a transformation in students' speaking experiences. One participant stated, "Before using Arabic Podcast, I often hesitated and paused a lot when speaking. Now I feel more confident because I am familiar with how sentences are naturally spoken." Another participant emphasized changes in fluency by stating, "Listening to native speakers every day changes the way I speak. I start to imitate their tone and rhythm, and speaking feels more fluent." The researcher interprets that both confidence and fluency develop through repeated exposure to authentic spoken input and continuous imitation, enabling students to feel more psychologically and linguistically prepared to speak Arabic.

**Table 1. Perceived Impact of YouTube Arabic Podcast on Speaking Confidence and Fluency**

Sub-theme	Meaning of Students' Lived Experiences	Representative Interview Excerpts
Increased speaking confidence	Students feel more confident speaking Arabic due to repeated exposure to and imitation of natural spoken expressions.	"Now I feel more confident because I am familiar with how sentences are naturally spoken." (P7)
Improved fluency	Students experience smoother and more continuous speech through imitation of native speakers' intonation and rhythm.	"I start to imitate their tone and rhythm, and speaking feels more fluent." (P14)
Shift in speaking focus	Students prioritize conveying meaning rather than grammatical accuracy.	"What matters is that my message is conveyed, not that it is grammatically perfect." (P10)

Table 1 illustrates patterns in students' lived experiences that cluster into three interrelated sub-themes: increased speaking confidence, improved fluency, and a shift in speaking focus. These sub-themes indicate that students' experiences involve not only technical improvements in speaking but also changes in psychological readiness. Repeated exposure to authentic spoken Arabic reduces anxiety, enhances fluency, and encourages students to view speaking as a communicative practice rather than a test of correctness. Collectively, the table demonstrates that YouTube Arabic Podcast functions as a learning medium that supports both the affective and linguistic dimensions of *maharah kalam* development.

### Arab Podcast YouTube Channel as a Learning Medium

Digital technology development has changed the paradigm of Arabic language learning in the modern era. Social media, particularly YouTube, has now become one of the main platforms utilized for foreign language learning, including Arabic. The "Arab Podcast"

YouTube channel emerges as one of the learning media innovations that offers a new approach in teaching Arabic through a podcast format packaged in interactive video form. This podcast not only provides learning materials, but also applies various translation techniques, thus supporting student understanding in learning Arabic. Thus, the use of effective translation techniques on the "Arab Podcast" channel can improve learning quality and facilitate deeper exploration of Arabic content. The use of appropriate translation techniques, such as literal and reduction, can help students understand Arabic language nuances better. Therefore, integrating these techniques in learning can provide richer and deeper learning experiences for students.

The Arab Podcast channel has proven to be an effective Arabic language learning resource for various groups, from beginners to university students. This platform utilizes the advantages of audio-visual technology to present learning materials that are more engaging and easily understood. The concept of "Takalam Arabiyah lebih Mudah melalui podcasts serta bebas akses" (Speak Arabic More Easily through podcasts and free access) promoted by Arab Podcast demonstrates this platform's commitment to providing accessible and quality Arabic language learning. Thus, Arab Podcast functions not only as a learning medium, but also as a bridge to improve listening and speaking skills in Arabic. The use of digital media such as podcasts enables students to actively engage in the learning process, thus increasing their motivation and interest in Arabic. Thus, utilizing digital media in Arabic language learning, as done by Arab Podcast, can significantly improve students' learning experience and support effective language mastery. Therefore, it is important to continue exploring and developing innovative learning methods in Arabic language education, to meet students' learning needs in this digital era.

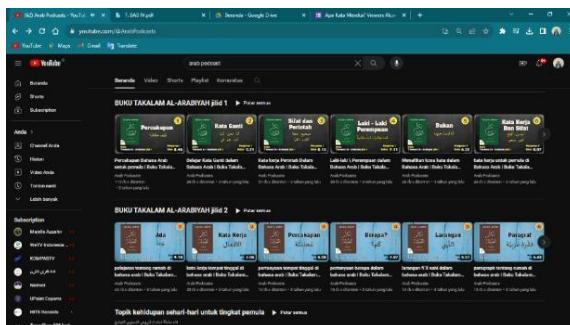
One of the main advantages of the Arab Podcast channel is its ability to develop students' speaking skills (*maharah kalam*). Learning *maharah kalam* through YouTube Arabic Podcast media has proven effective in improving students' communication abilities using Arabic. This method provides opportunities for students to listen to authentic conversations in Arabic, understand intonation, and learn language usage in real communication contexts. The implementation of the Arab Podcast channel in *maharah kalam* learning also shows high satisfaction levels from students. This is due to the interactive and engaging learning approach, which differs from conventional learning methods. Students can interact with content, repeat difficult parts, and learn at a pace suited to their individual abilities. The Arab podcast implementation that the researcher observed is as follows:



**Figure 1. Arab Podcasts YouTube Profile**

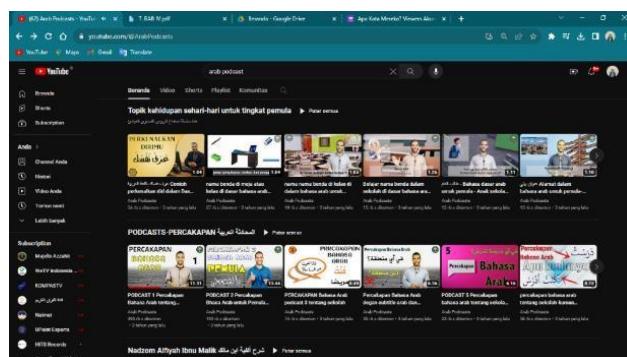
Arab Podcasts is a YouTube channel that presents Arabic language learning for beginners. Its content includes daily conversations, basics of nahwu and shorof, pronunciation exercises for letters and vocabulary (mufradat), and correct writing guides. This channel is suitable for students or anyone who wants to learn Arabic from the basics.

The instructor on this channel is Ustadz Shady Elsayed, an Arabic teacher from Egypt who graduated from Cairo University and Al-Azhar. He is an expert in teaching Arabic for various levels, from beginner to advanced, and has special experience teaching students from Southeast Asian regions such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. Interestingly, besides using Arabic as his native language, he is also fluent in Indonesian and English. Since its launch on May 5, 2020, the Arab Podcasts channel has attracted many enthusiasts, evidenced by the number of subscribers reaching 157 thousand.



**Figure 2. Content Discussion of Takalam Al-Arabiyah Books Volume 1 and 2**

The Takalam al-Arabiyah book is divided into two volumes with different material discussions. In volume 1, there are 12 chapters that teach Arabic basics, starting from simple conversations, the use of pronouns (dhamir), ways to express adjectives and commands, and differences between words for males and females. Other chapters discuss how to use the word 'not', the use of verbs and adjectives, the verb "exist", verbs "أدخل - أسمع" (al-raqam), numbers 1-10 (al-raqam), ways to say "don't know", and how to ask "where" in Arabic. Meanwhile, volume 2 contains 11 more complex materials. The materials include the use of the word "exist" (يُجَدَ), various verbs (الأفعال), conversations (محادثة), how to ask "how many" (كم), prohibition expressions (النهي), how to make paragraphs (فقرة عربية), vocabulary about food (الطعام), verb forms (حرکات الفعل), how to ask "what to eat?" (ماذا تتناول?), fruit names (أسماء الفاكهة), and vocabulary related to markets (مفردات السوق).



**Figure 3. Daily Life Topic Content for Beginner Level**

This channel presents Arabic learning materials that focus on daily situations. The topics discussed are very practical, starting from self-introduction, vocabulary related to class and school, to various conversations about seeking knowledge, asking for addresses, stating names, talking about family, and using commonly used daily verbs. The materials also include learning about dzaraf makan (place adverbs), dzaraf zaman (time adverbs),

and how to talk about holidays. What makes this content very suitable for beginners is Ustadz Syadzi As-Syayid's systematic and easy-to-follow teaching method. He delivers materials with appropriate tempo and clear articulation, so beginning learners can easily grasp and understand every lesson given.

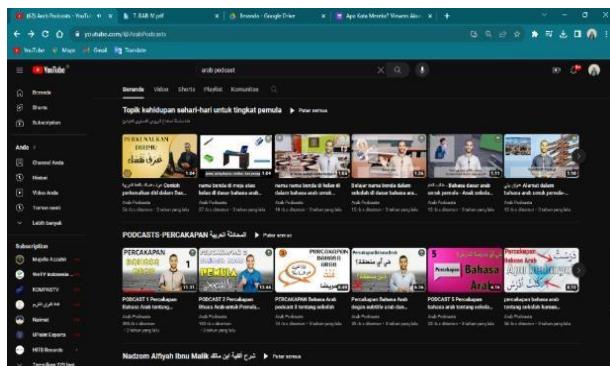


Figure 4. Muhadatsah Arabiyah Content

In the muhadatsah (conversation) section, Ustadz Syadzi As-Syayid uses a systematic learning approach. He starts by demonstrating conversations in Arabic, then provides detailed explanations in Indonesian for easy understanding. Interestingly, he not only teaches correct methods, but also shows common errors that often occur in daily conversations, then explains the proper ways. Materials are arranged gradually, starting from basic themes like introductions, developing to family topics, and conversations about school life. This research uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through the YouTube platform and interviews. Research subjects were selected using random sampling technique from graduate students currently enrolled in the Arabic Language Education program, class of 2024, at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, active students in class B, consisting of 8 males and 9 females. Total respondents in this research were 17 students. Research instruments used interviews containing 10 main questions related to YouTube usage in learning. Data analysis was conducted by examining key answers representative of all questions posed in interviews. To ensure data validity, researchers conducted source triangulation by comparing data from three different classes, and method triangulation by combining interview data with observation of learning activities through YouTube. The research results are as follows:

Based on interview results with 17 graduate student respondents at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, YouTube Arabic Podcast utilization shows very positive impacts in improving Arabic language abilities (*maharah kalam*). Respondents revealed that content presented by Ustadz Syadzi As-Syayid is very systematic and easily understood, with gradual teaching methods and the use of three languages (Arabic, Indonesian, and English) in explanations. The majority of respondents reported significant improvements in confidence speaking Arabic after regularly following this content. This channel functions not only as an additional learning resource, but also as a teaching reference relevant to Indonesian students' needs. Users experience real benefits in terms of vocabulary improvement, accent and intonation correction, and daily conversational abilities. The learning methods used, including step-by-step approaches and practical examples, are considered very effective in helping understand sentence structure and its usage in real contexts.

## Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that YouTube Arabic Podcasts function as a learner-centered and psychologically supportive environment for developing *maharah kalam*. This result aligns with previous studies on technology-mediated language learning, which emphasize that digital media can reduce speaking anxiety by providing flexible and self-paced learning opportunities. Prior research on podcast-based language learning highlights its role in enabling repeated exposure and autonomous practice, allowing learners to internalize spoken language before producing it orally. However, this study extends existing literature by foregrounding students' lived experiences rather than focusing solely on skill improvement (Alwadi et al., 2025; Shurafa, 2024). Unlike studies that measure speaking outcomes quantitatively, this research reveals how students experience podcasts as a safe space, emphasizing emotional comfort and control over learning pace as central elements of speaking development.

The theme of flexibility and autonomy found in this study is also consistent with literature on self-directed learning and mobile-assisted language learning. Earlier studies suggest that the ability to access learning materials anytime and anywhere enhances learner motivation and engagement (Haseeb et al., 2024; Leblebici, 2025). The present findings confirm this view but further demonstrate that flexibility is not merely logistical; it shapes how students construct meaning during learning. Students' ability to replay, pause, and adjust speed allows them to negotiate understanding at their own pace, leading to a gradual and more natural internalization of Arabic expressions (Frick et al., 2023). This experiential dimension is less emphasized in prior research, which often treats flexibility as a technical advantage rather than as a formative learning experience.

Regarding speaking confidence and fluency, the findings support existing studies that report positive effects of exposure to authentic spoken input on oral proficiency. Previous research has shown that listening to native speakers helps learners improve pronunciation, intonation, and fluency (Mancilla et al., 2024; Panggua et al., 2020). This study corroborates those findings but adds a phenomenological insight: confidence and fluency emerge simultaneously as interconnected experiences. Students do not perceive fluency merely as technical smoothness, but as a feeling of readiness to speak without fear (Abdelaal et al., 2024; Ramadan, 2023). This suggests that affective and linguistic dimensions of speaking development are inseparable, a point that is often under-theorized in conventional skill-based language studies.

The use of the Arab Podcast YouTube channel as a learning medium also resonates with literature on audiovisual learning and multilingual scaffolding. Prior studies highlight that the use of learners' first language or a familiar lingua franca can facilitate comprehension in foreign language learning. The findings of this study reinforce this argument by showing that the integration of Arabic, Indonesian, and English explanations helps students bridge understanding and reduces cognitive overload. At the same time, this study differs from earlier research by emphasizing how translation techniques are experienced by learners as supportive rather than distracting, positioning translation not as a weakness but as a strategic pedagogical resource in spoken language learning.

Theoretically, this study contributes to Arabic language education by strengthening the phenomenological understanding of *maharah kalam* as a lived experience shaped by emotional safety, autonomy, and authentic exposure. It challenges traditional views that

prioritize grammatical accuracy over communicative confidence by showing a shift in students' speaking orientation toward meaning-making. Practically, the findings suggest that lecturers and curriculum designers should integrate podcast-based learning as a complementary space for speaking practice, particularly to support learners who experience anxiety in formal classroom settings. Designing speaking instruction that combines structured classroom interaction with flexible digital media can foster more inclusive, confidence-building, and learner-oriented Arabic language learning environments.

## CONCLUSION / الخلاصة

This study concludes that the use of YouTube Arabic Podcasts plays a significant role in supporting the development of *maharah kalam* among graduate students by providing a flexible, autonomous, and psychologically safe learning environment. The most important insight gained from this research is that speaking development is not merely a technical linguistic process but a lived experience shaped by emotional comfort, repeated exposure, and learner control. Students experience podcasts as a non-threatening space where mistakes are normalized, anxiety is reduced, and confidence gradually emerges. Through repeated listening, imitation, and self-paced practice, learners internalize authentic spoken Arabic and become more willing to express ideas orally. The findings highlight that confidence and fluency develop simultaneously as interconnected dimensions, indicating that affective readiness is inseparable from linguistic competence. This study demonstrates that technology-mediated learning, when experienced as meaningful and supportive, can effectively address long-standing challenges in Arabic speaking instruction at the higher education level.

From a scholarly perspective, this research contributes to Arabic language education by enriching the theoretical discourse on digital pedagogy through a phenomenological lens. It positions *maharah kalam* as a holistic experience involving emotional, cognitive, and communicative dimensions, thereby challenging grammar-centered instructional paradigms. The study also offers practical contributions by providing an evidence-based framework for integrating podcast-based learning into speaking instruction. Nevertheless, this research has limitations. It focuses on a single institution with a relatively small number of participants and relies on self-reported experiences rather than longitudinal performance data. Future research is recommended to involve multiple institutions, diverse learner populations, and mixed-method approaches to examine long-term impacts on speaking proficiency. Further studies may also explore comparative analyses between podcast-based learning and other digital speaking interventions to deepen understanding of technology-enhanced Arabic language learning.

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