

The Strategy of Developing Speaking Skills among the Students of the Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory, Rembau

Abdul Hakim Ariffin, Diaya Uddeen Deab Mahmoud Alzitawi,
Zulkiflee bin Haron

Academy of Islamic Civilization, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities,
University Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Malaysia.

Email: haabdul2@graduate.utm.my, diaya@utm.my, zulkiflee@utm.my

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i9/18516> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i9/18516

Published Date: 13 September 2023

Abstract

This article presents a strategy for developing speaking skills in learning and acquiring Arabic language for students of Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory, Rembau. This research aims to provide a better understanding of foreign language learning and to identify effective methods for improving speaking skills in the Institute's environment. For this purpose, data analysis was carried out using a qualitative methodology that included processing the data collected through interviews and observations. The findings indicated that some of the Arabic language teachers at the Institute need to improve their teaching methods to improve students' speaking skills. To explore this topic, the Institute has implemented a range of strategies, including the creation of a permanent environment for students to practice speaking Arabic and using teaching techniques that focus on pronunciation and vocabulary building. This research also highlights the importance of considering several factors affecting the preparation of syllabuses, teaching methods, and the roles of teachers and students in language education when developing effective strategies to improve speaking skills in general. This article provides valuable insight into the challenges of Arabic language education and offers practical solutions to improve students' speaking abilities.

Keywords: Arabic Language, Speaking Skills, Strategies, Institute

Introduction

Learning a foreign language is not easy, however through research and study, Arabic language can be taught in a short period of time with the right effort. Language is an essential component of human progress because of its intellectual, cultural and social role. It is a means of communication and self-expression, and language education here means the intended process of enabling an individual to learn a second or foreign language.

The Qur'an elevated the status of learning the Arabic language until it became an integral part of every Muslim's faith and one of the obligations of his religion which a Muslim cannot fall short. Ibn Taymiyyah says:

"For the Arabic language itself is from the religion, having knowledge of it is an obligation because understanding the Book and the Sunnah is an obligation. And (the religion) cannot be understood except by understanding the Arabic language, and that without which an obligation cannot be fulfilled, is itself obligatory." (al-Iqtidaa, p. 295)

This is what gives the Arabic language an advantage over all other languages, for there is no language other than Arabic – as far as we know. - Learning it is an obligation of religion, *"and the demand for learning is from the religion."*

The Noble Qur'an cannot be understood, and its meanings contemplated or even the recitation of its letters without the Arabic language. Allah, the Most High says:

"And truly, this (the Qur'an) is a revelation from the Lord of the Álamín (mankind, jinn and all that exists. Which the trustworthy Ruh [Jibril (Gabriel)] has brought down. Upon your heart (O Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that you may be (one) of the warners. In the plain Arabic language." (Surah Al-Shu'ara: Verses 192-195) (Hani Ismail, 2018, p. 4)

Whoever follows a path in which he seeks to learn the Arabic language, Allah will facilitate for him a path to understanding the Qur'an. And the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

"Whoever takes a path seeking knowledge, Allah will facilitate for him a path to Paradise." (Narrated by Muslim)

Speaking skill plays an important role in learning a foreign language and achieving cultural communication, as this skill is highly appreciated in the modern era. Therefore, it is necessary for educational institutions to concentrate on developing students' foreign language speaking skills. However, teaching the skill of speaking in a foreign language is one of the biggest challenges in learning a foreign language, due to the scarcity of opportunities for students to speak the foreign language outside the classroom.

The Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory, Rembau has developed an appropriate method for its students, based on the schedule of lessons inside and outside the classroom, to develop speaking skills. It is an institution specialized in teaching the Arabic language, and accordingly the institute provides a supportive environment for the development of Arabic language speaking skills, in addition to using effective teaching methods and techniques in developing the skill of speaking in the Arabic language.

This article aims to illustrate the strategy of developing speaking skills among the institute's students, and review some of the methods and techniques used by the institution in Arabic language education. It intends to help the students build their verbal skills and to further develop and improve this strategy. The Institute shall consider several factors to operationalize the learning environment, curriculum, and teaching methods, as well as the role of teachers and students in learning the Arabic language.

This article also aims to provide a better understanding of foreign language learning and develop a vision of effective ways to develop students' speaking skills in the institute's environment. In addition, we will evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy and analyse the factors that influence Arabic language learning among the students.

In fact, the level of the Arabic among the students at Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory is still weak, especially with regards to speaking skill. Therefore, it is the duty of this education institution to enhance efforts and means to develop students' speaking skills so that they can communicate fluently and effectively in this language. In this article, we will discuss the strategy for developing the speaking skill of the Institute's student by presenting some of the methods and techniques used by this institution in teaching the Arabic language and assisting teachers in building and developing their performance efficiently and competently.

Based on this introduction, the research problem can be framed as follows:

What are the possible ways to improve the Arabic speaking skill of students with a low level, especially in the necessity of practicing the Arabic language in daily conversations?

Literature Review

This literary article focuses on appropriate methods to improve students' speaking ability in Arabic in religious schools. Four scholarly articles were used as a reference (Syamaun, 2016; Wijaya, 2017; Suharti, 2020; Hamid, 2013).

Wijaya, (2017) stresses the importance of effective education management in Arabic language education, including teacher competency, pedagogical skills, and social and professional competence. According to Andriana (2015), good planning for teaching Arabic plays an important role in improving students' ability to speak Arabic.

It includes setting educational goals, preparing study materials, using appropriate means and methods, in addition to evaluating education results. Chalik (2014) provides a comprehensive guide to methods of teaching the Arabic language, which is used as a reference in some universities. While Muhammad (2001) talks about the basic theories related to the teaching of Arabic in religious schools in Malaysia. Overall, the four articles recommend that effective Arabic language teaching requires a combination of teacher competency, effective planning, and appropriate teaching methods.

Shamoon (2016) recommends that basic speaking skills, such as dialogue, vocabulary, and facial expressions, to be taught with the intention of improving the ability to speak Arabic. Wijaya (2017) stresses the importance of good language teaching management, including understanding the principles of Arabic language education, managing the teaching process and comprehensive education, while setting a good example for students. Suharti (2020) recommends that language education include local content to increase the ability to speak, in addition to integrating religious knowledge with moral values and Hamid (2013) emphasizes the importance of using correct measurement tools to assess the ability to speak Arabic.

This requires teaching basic speaking skills, managing language instruction effectively, integrating local content, and using the right measurement tools to assess Arabic speaking ability in Quranic circles. However, this article explores different issues from that of public schools, because it deals with the issue of applying methods of teaching the Arabic language in the school of memorizing the Noble Qur'an of "Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory", which enjoys a distinct specificity in the context of teaching the Arabic language. It requires a special approach that considers the nature and needs of the students in that school and those who have a basic knowledge of the Arabic language and focuses on memorizing the Noble Qur'an.

In addition, this article highlights the problem of Arabic language education for students who are fluent in basic Arabic, such as limited opportunities to speak Arabic and the lack of focus on speaking skill. To overcome these problems, this article offers practical and effective solutions, comprising of teaching the skill of speaking in the Arabic language systematically, benefiting from the favourable educational environment, integration of local content and religious values into the teaching, and use of appropriate measurement tools to assess students' ability to speak.

Therefore, this article produces an invaluable contribution to the development of Arabic language teaching in the Noble Quran memorization school of "Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory", which could potentially be an essential reference for teachers of Arabic language at similar institutions.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted using the method of observation and field research, then collection of data directly from the Institute's research website. Observation was made by observing and recording Arabic learning activities in the classroom and the interaction between students and teachers during the teaching process. The data collected through observation is then used as a reference for analysis strategies for developing students' speaking skills.

In addition, I used here a strategic model to improve students' ability to speak Arabic based on an assessment of the extent to which the objectives of teaching Arabic language to non-Arab students are achieved. This model is illustrated through the learning framework called the "educational structure model" (Figure 1) and it is as follows:

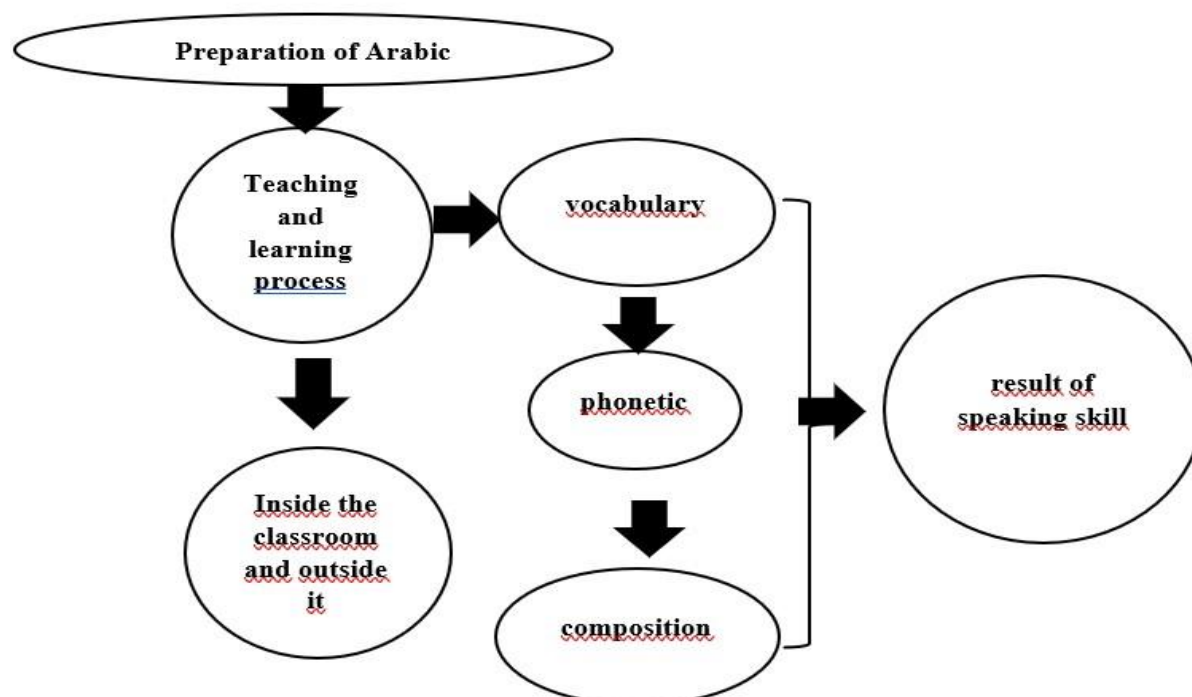


Figure 1: The educational structure model.

The data is analysed using the qualitative methodology, by processing the data collected through observation and interview and is analysed objectively. It is then classified and

interpreted to find the desired patterns and results, then the results of the analysis are used to conclude everything related to the effectiveness of the strategy for the development of students' speaking skill and the factors that influence the students' Arabic language education at the institute.

Results and Discussion

The study indicates that some Arabic language teachers at the Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory do not pay enough attention to the modern Arabic language teaching strategy for speaking skill. This leads to a general weakness on the level of competency of the students' Arabic language knowledge. Consequently, this weakness emerges in the students' speaking skill level which resulted in the students' poor linguistic performance.

According to the latest statistical data, the number of students enrolling in Arabic language classes increase from year to year. As a result, the improvement of the quality of Arabic language teaching has become a top priority. Despite this, many Arabic language teachers still rely on traditional teaching methods, such as reading and writing, which are insufficient to effectively develop students' speaking skills.

The importance of speaking skill in learning Arabic cannot be ignored. The ability to speak fluently enables a person to communicate more smoothly and effectively. This skill is extremely important in a variety of situations, from everyday conversations to business negotiations. Improving the quality of Arabic language teaching, especially at the institute and other educational institutions, is becoming increasingly important due to the growing demand for graduates who speak fluent Arabic. Therefore, more modern and effective teaching methods must be applied to help students develop their language skills.

The results of this study provide some strategies that can be used, such as using new vocabulary and sentence-building in daily dialogues, simulating the way words and phrases are pronounced in Arabic, and comparing different vocabulary and constructing sentences to choose the most appropriate one. In addition, this study also highlights the importance of facilitating discussion and debate in Arabic as part of teaching and has found that modern and effective methods of teaching Arabic not only increase students' speaking skills, but also motivate them to learn Arabic with greater enthusiasm.

This can be seen from the students' increased participation in education, particularly their interest in learning the Arabic language and their self-confidence when speaking Arabic in front of an audience. Therefore, it is of immense importance that Arabic language teachers provide modern and effective teaching methods and facilitate discussions and dialogues in Arabic so that students can directly benefit from it and be motivated to learn Arabic better. In the long run, these efforts will help improve the quality of Arabic language teaching and ensure that graduates from such institutions speak Arabic fluently and proficiently. Consequently, it will amplify their opportunities in the labour market, as is the case at our institute.

In addition, privy to our endeavour to raise the quality of Arabic language education, there are also several important elements that must be considered

- 1) Students should collect new Arabic vocabulary and compositions and use them in sentences that are useful when talking to others.
- 2) Students should mimic the pronunciation of native Arabic speakers when pronouncing words using different combinations.

- 3) Students should find out the differences between the vocabulary and the different structures so that they can choose the most appropriate.
- 4) Students must practice speaking skills by following advertisements, plays, debates, using stories and oral expressions about targeted topic. Additionally, students must be able to ask questions and deliver speeches and lectures in Arabic.

And if the students can meet these elements well, the result will be clear that the students can speak fluent Arabic in the school environment; Therefore, I propose a framework for teaching speech in the Arabic language that can be applied in developing the speaking skill among students in Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory (see Figure 2), which is as follows:

- 1) Students should naturally acquire more vocabulary and practice frequently and employ the rules of traditional and contemporary Arabic grammar.
- 2) Students must attend training courses to improve proper Arabic pronunciation under the supervision of a qualified teacher.
- 3) Students should practice Arabic with their classmates to improve their speaking skill.
- 4) Students should take the opportunity to speak in normal situations such as debates, speeches, and lectures.
- 5) Students should take opportunities to analyse and evaluate their speaking skills and make necessary improvements.

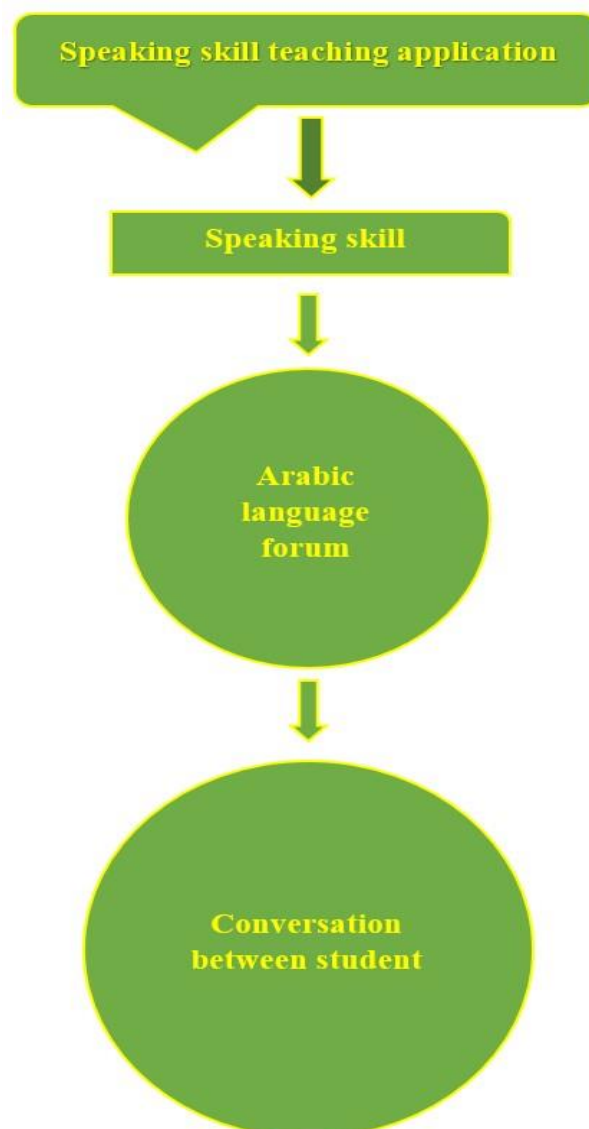


Figure 2: The framework for teaching speech in the Arabic language.

In conclusion, the development of speaking skills in Arabic among students at the Maahad Tahfiz Arabic Al-Gontory requires a deliberate and systematic approach. Through the application of appropriate strategies and a good academic structure, students can develop their speaking skill and confidence in practicing the Arabic language in daily life.

Conclusion

The correct and effective teaching strategy can play an important role in developing the Arabic speaking skill of our students and Arabic language teachers must consider the students' needs and provide various opportunities to speak and listen to the Arabic language actively with a desire and consideration for more proficiency. In addition, the use of modern technology can help in teaching the Arabic language to improve speaking skills, such as using electronic applications and platforms. To sustain and further improve the teaching and development of the Arabic language, cooperation between teachers and students is required.

Teachers must provide speaking opportunities for students and offer constructive feedback for enticement and encouragement. On the other hand, students must be active in learning and take the initiative to speak Arabic every day until, in this way, the acceptable level is achieved. To achieve better results in teaching the Arabic language, the teaching strategies used must be continuously developed, so teachers must evaluate those teaching strategies applied regularly without interruption and always striving to find more effective teaching methods to improve speaking skill in Arabic.

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