

## THE STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN PRACTICING ARABIC'S *MAHARAH KALAM* AT THE ARABIC LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IAIN LANGSA

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### Abstract

*Mahārah kalām* (speaking skill) is one of four language skills for learning Arabic, the other three skills being *istima'* (listening), *qirā'ah* (reading), and *kitābah* (writing). When learning to speak Arabic, students deal with both linguistic and non-linguistic challenges. This study used the descriptive analytical method with a qualitative approach to explore barriers in acquiring Arabic *mahārah kalām*. The subjects of this study were college students majoring in Arabic language education at IAIN Langsa, in Aceh. By means of interviews and questionnaire, the study found that impediments to *mahārah kalām* mastery were lack of self-confidence, limitations of introductory vocabulary, poor knowledge of grammar (*qawā'id*) and of composition (*tarākīb*), and discomfort felt by listeners when lacking in conversational understanding. There were non-linguistic factors among the students too: differences in educational background; majoring in Arabic but not as a first choice; a limited language practice environment; and some limitations of teaching methodology. Accordingly, to improve students' speaking skill, lecturers should seek to develop students' motivation, memory, and practicing of speaking, by rehearsing examples from texts and from typical situations. To overcome barriers, academic lecturers should create supportive *bi'ah lughawiyah*, mandatory Arabic-day programs, and the use of media, such as YouTube, to expose students to new *mufradah* and pattern practices (*ushlub*).

**Keywords:** *mahārah kalām, learning barriers, Arabic language learners*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Spoken language is a symbolic system using vocalized sounds created and used by community members to interact with each other.<sup>1</sup> J.J. Lamberts defines language as a form of human behavior. Like family or religion, it is one of mankind's cultural systems. This seems obvious enough once it is said, but it does recognize that language has a broader base than most of us ordinarily assume. We are likely to think of language as communication that is drawn (as in pictographs), or is in hand-written and printed modes.<sup>2</sup> In terms of the behavioral role of language, it functions as a tool usable by persons to express information, opinions, thoughts, and feelings to others. In Arabic, *mahārah kalām* (speaking skill) denotes one of the four linguistic skills (*mahārah*). The other three are *istima'* (listening), *qirā'ah* (reading), and *kitābah* (writing). These four skills are basic components of learning Arabic. And in learning a second language which of these aspects seems to be the most daunting? Many people find that speaking in a new language is the hardest. Firstly, and unlike reading or writing, speaking occurs in real time with a listener waiting for each next word. Secondly, by contrast to writing, it is awkward while speaking to edit or revise what you intended to say, which is more easily done when writing.<sup>3</sup>

Mahmud Kamil Al-Naqah has stated that the urgency for speaking skills in the context of learning a foreign language is based in the oral aspect of all language itself. Thus the speaking skill is often the main focus in a foreign language learning curriculum. In fact, most practitioners in foreign language education consider speaking proficiency to be the main goal of such programs.<sup>4</sup> This opinion of Al-Naqah is also rational for the everyday life of a person seeking proficiency. Speaking skill (*mahārah kalām*) is the moment-by-moment ability to convey sounds with the articulation and vocabulary to express ideas, opinions, intentions, or feelings in real time to the listener.<sup>5</sup> Riggenbach and Lazaraton assert that language students are considered successful if they can communicate effectively when speaking in a second language.<sup>6</sup>

For any students learning non-native languages, errors and difficulties often occur, and especially among Arabic language learners. Learning Arabic is a long and complex task, and there are many obstacles that make it difficult for second-language learners. This is the case in

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<sup>1</sup> Sumarsono dan Paina Partana, *Sosiolinguistik* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), 18; Tricia Hedge, *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> J.J. Lamberts, "Basic Concepts for Teaching from Structural Linguistics". In Graham Wilson (Ed.), *A Linguistics Readers* (pp. 3-9) (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> David Nunan (Ed.), *Practical English Language Teaching* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2003), p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Mahmud Kamil Al-Naqah, *Ta'lim al-Lughah al-Arabiyyah Li al-Nathiqin Bi Lughahat Ukhra: Ususuh, Mahakihiluh, Thuruq Tadrisih* (Makkah al-Mukarramah: Jami'ah Um al-Qura, 1985), p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> Ulin Nuha, *Ragam Metodologi dan Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Yogyakarta: DIVA Press, 2016), p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Heidi Riggenbach and Anne Lazaraton, "Promoting Oral Communication Skills". In Marianne Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (pp. 125-135) (Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle, 1991).

Madrasas, which are the lower and higher secondary schools, as well as in Islamic Boarding Schools, called Pesantren, and in universities including the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) in Langsa, Aceh, where this research was conducted. Amid difficult aspects of a second language, the motivation for learning and persistence can wane. Motivation is often the factor that primarily determines success or failure in such a complex task.<sup>7</sup>

To explore the factors causing difficulties in learning mahārah kalām, it was useful to conduct in-depth comprehensive qualitative research. Both external and internal factors should be considered as possible weaknesses as students try to learn the spoken Arabic language. Internal factors could be a lack of diligence in attending lectures, a misperception of the mahārah kalām process, or a low level of attention to linguistic ability in previous schooling. In some cases, students' motivation may be low due to being assigned to study in the Arabic Language Education Department even though it was not their preferred choice. External factors causing difficulties could be environments that do not fully engage students in practicing spoken Arabic, or isolating effects of the different backgrounds among students in a college cohort.

## **B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1. Speaking Skills (*Mahārah Kalām*)**

Speaking skill is the most basic and most actively used ability in language. Spoken language facilitates day-to-day and formal communication, be it one-way or two-way, as used in person, by phone, via radio, on television, and in films. Thus speaking skill is a considered notably valuable aspect of learning a foreign language. In terms of epistemology and Arabic, *kalām* denotes the pronunciation of sounds properly and correctly in accordance with the verbalizations that come from the *makbrāj* as known by linguists. And *mahārah kalām* is the skill of talking without hesitation and without much repetition of vocabulary or formulaic expressions.<sup>8</sup>

For developing the speaking skills to emphasize content and meaning in oral messages, various forms and methods can be used, in accordance with the level of mastery of language that has been internalized by students. The format for teaching speaking skills can include activities using spoken language at appropriate degrees of difficulty.<sup>9</sup>

In essence, *mahārah kalām* is the ability to use the most nuanced levels of language to express thoughts and feelings with the right words and good sentence structures. This includes

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<sup>7</sup> H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> Abd. Wahab Rosyidi dan Mamlu'atul Ni'mah, *Memahami Konsep Dasar Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Malang: UIN-Maliki Press, 2012), pp. 88-89.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

using the grammar and sound systems, in addition to other aspects of *mahārah* language, as for listening, reading, and writing. The ability to speak (*mahārah kalām*) is based on the ability to listen (receptive), the ability to pronounce (productive), and the knowledge (relative) of vocabulary and sentence patterns that allow speakers to communicate their thoughts.<sup>10</sup> Thus *mahārah kalām* enables conveying clear messages to others in a socially acceptable way.

## 2. Difficulties in Learning

Learning, according to Esa and Baharuddin, is a human process to achieve competencies, skills, and attitudes. Learning starts at human birth and continues until the end of life.<sup>11</sup> As stated by the education expert Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata, the effort to learn and the success in learning are influenced by many factors. These factors arise internally from the students themselves, and externally from people around them, and from the sociocultural environment.<sup>12</sup> Inhibitors of effort and causes of learning failure can similarly be influenced by internal and external factors.

## 3. Internal Factors Affecting Learners

Factors that come from within the students themselves include physiological aspects (physicality) and psychological aspects (spirituality).<sup>13</sup> The physiological aspect is one's bodily condition when learning, which of course can greatly affect the learning outcomes. Physiological aspects can be viewed from two aspects, namely in terms of a student's bodily condition and the condition of a student's five senses.<sup>14</sup>

Problems due to the physical condition of students may arise from weak organs, especially when this is accompanied by dizziness, headaches, or notable discomfort. This can reduce the quality of the creative (cognitive) realm, even to the extent that the material being studied is only partially learned or even leaves no trace. As to the condition of the five senses, impairment in hearing or in vision will hamper the ability of students to correctly or fully absorb information.

Psychological aspects can also affect the quantity and quality of learning outcomes for students due to emotional or mental turmoil, as can also be the case for spiritual factors. Other

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<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Fuad Mahmud Ilyan, *Al-Mahārat al-Lughawiyah: Mahiyatuba wa Thara'iq Tadrisiha* (Riyadh: Dār al-Muslim Li al-Nasyr wa al-Tauzi, 1992), p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Wahyuni Nur Esa dan Baharuddin, *Teori Belajar dan Pembelajaran* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2009), p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata, *Landasan Psikologi Proses Pendidikan* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2007), p. 162.

<sup>13</sup> Muhibbin Syah, *Psikologi Pendidikan dengan Pendekatan Baru* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2008), p. 132.

<sup>14</sup> Ngalim Purwanto, *Psikologi Pendidikan* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2007), p. 107.

issues may arise, related to a student's intelligence level, attitudes, talents, interests, and motivations.<sup>15</sup>

#### **4. External Factors Affecting Learners**

External factors include sociocultural situations and environmental conditions that do not support, or may even hinder, student learning activities. Examples may arise in the family environment, in the school or college community, and in societal situations.

In addition to these general factors, relevant to all students, there are other factors that cause learning difficulties. These can include syndromes considered to be forms of learning disability. Each such condition is defined and documented as having a symptom spectrum serving as an indicator of a psychological abnormality that causes learning difficulties. Examples of these syndromes are dyslexia (inability to learn to read), dysgraphia (inability to learn to write), and dyscalculia (inability to learn mathematics).<sup>16</sup>

#### **5. Difficulties in Learning Arabic**

Most learners when studying a new language will experience several difficulties. Accumulating the new language's vocabulary is always daunting. Even more challenging can be the pattern of differences between the student's mother tongue, as commonly used in everyday life, and the language being newly studied.<sup>17</sup>

Difficulties in learning Arabic in Indonesia generally exist in two basic categories, namely linguistic and non-linguistic. Linguistic difficulties involve sound-system, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Non-linguistic difficulties include socio-cultural, psychological, and methodological issues.<sup>18</sup>

##### **1) Linguistic Issues in Arabic**

Linguistic difficulties arise from elements that are the definitional and structural aspects of a language.<sup>19</sup> Difficulties arise when learning any new language, and specifically in learning Arabic these challenges include several aspects of the language, as follows:<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Muhibbin Syah, *Psikologi Pendidikan dengan Pendekatan Baru*, p. 133.

<sup>16</sup> Muhibbin Syah, *Psikologi Belajar* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2013), pp. 184-186; Janette K. Klingner, Sharon Vaughn, and Alison Boardman, *Teaching Reading Comprehension to Students with Learning Difficulties* (New York: Guilford, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Nandang Sarif Hidayat, "Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab", *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* Vol. 37, no. 1 (2012), pp. 82-89; Larry Andrews, *Language Exploration and Awareness: A Resource Book for Teachers* (Marwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2008).

<sup>18</sup> Syamsudin Asyrofi, *Metodologi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Yogyakarta: IdePress, 2010), p. 53.

<sup>19</sup> Nazri Syakur, *Revolusi Metodologi Pengajaran Bahasa Arab* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Insan Madani, 2010), p. 69.

a. Phonetics

Arabic phonetics -- the sound systems of a language -- exhibit many differences from the Indonesian language. Arabic has a variety of pronunciation procedures and characteristics, such as the *halqiyah*/throat sound system, the two-mouth sound system, and the nose sound system. Conversely, there are several Indonesian phonemes that have no equivalent in Arabic, such as the pronunciations of letters P, G, and NG.<sup>21</sup>

b. Grammar

Grammar in Arabic is called *qawā'id* and is typically difficult for students in learning Arabic. The difficulties are related to both word formation (*sharfīyyah*) and sentence structure (*nahwīyyah*).<sup>22</sup>

c. Sentence Structure

Another linguistic difficulty in learning Arabic is its sentence structure (*tarāķib*). This difficulty can be overcome by giving *ismīyyah* (noun phrases) and *fi'liyyah* (verbal phrases) sentence patterns in various high frequencies, and then practicing these with various advanced language patterns (*uslub*) as well.<sup>23</sup>

## 2) Non-Linguistic Issues in Arabic

a. Psychological Barriers

The psychological difficulties in question are related to motivation for, and interest in, learning Arabic. Motivation and interest furnish an initial foundation for achieving learning success. Without both factors, the process of learning will feel gratuitous or even purposeless. In the absence of an ultimate goal or purpose, the motivation to learn is notably diminished. Many factors able to influence interest and motivation should be incorporated in lesson materials, demonstrated by teacher attitudes, encouraged through family supportiveness, made interesting with social themes, be relevant to personal goals, invoke student talents and hobbies, make use of mass media, and engage with other facilities.<sup>24</sup>

b. Methodological Barriers

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<sup>20</sup> Kafrawi dkk., *Pedoman Pengajaran Bahasa Arab pada Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam LAIN* (Jakarta: Depag, 1975), p. 79.

<sup>21</sup> Nandang Sarif Hidayat, "Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab", *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* Vol. 37, no. 1 (2012), pp. 82-89. See also David Abercrombie, "English Phonetic Texts." In L.R. Palmer, *Studies in General Linguistics* (London: Faber and Faber, 1984).

<sup>22</sup> Aziz Fahrurrozi, "Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: Problematika dan Solusinya", *Jurnal Arabiyat* Vol. 1, no. 2 (2014), pp. 161-179.

<sup>23</sup> Aziz Fahrurrozi, "Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: Problematika dan Solusinya", *Jurnal Arabiyat* Vol. 1, no. 2 (2014), pp. 161-179.

<sup>24</sup> Sofiatun, *Problematika Non-Linguistik Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Siswa Kelas X* Adima Nurul Huda Sukaraja, Oku Timur, Sumsel TA 2011/2012, *Skripsi*, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2012, p. 15.

Teacher competence of course has a notable influence on students' success. Indonesian Law No 14 of 2005 specifies four essential aspects of competence, namely pedagogical, personable, social, and professional.<sup>25</sup> These four competencies enable a teacher to create quality learning and achieve educational standards.

The teacher's selection of learning methods will affect learning outcomes. Methods should be chosen appropriately for the objectives, materials, available facilities, and students' ability level. The teacher's use of resources and methods has significant effects on whether Arabic language learning reaches its proper goals.<sup>26</sup>

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

Research in this study used qualitative methodology. Data was collected for the goal of descriptive analysis.<sup>27</sup> The research subjects were students in an Arabic Education Department, appropriate to the research goal of documenting difficulties encountered during learning to speak (*maharah kalām*) Arabic, inside and outside the classroom. Descriptive analysis was used specify the phenomena about which data would be collected, with the goal of describing and analyzing the existing conditions. The descriptive method depends on the study of phenomena that exist in reality and then are observed in order to accurately describe their situation.<sup>28</sup> For such analysis the researchers first solicit data and information from the field, in this case the IAIN Langsa, Aceh, and then analyze the data inductively.

Sample selection in qualitative research differs from selection in quantitative studies since it does not stem from statistical calculations. The sample obtains maximum information, but not as generalizations.<sup>29</sup> The sample in this study was composed of all students in the Arabic Language Education Department in the 2018/2019 academic year, and it encompassed 30 students.

The instruments used in this study were interviews and questionnaires. Interviews are essentially a flexible oral questionnaire in which researchers collect data and information from informants.<sup>30</sup> Interviews were conducted with the head of the Arabic language education department and the lecturer of the *kalām* course, the purpose of which was to solicit information usable for implementing the research and thus for analyzing the results. The type of questionnaire

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<sup>25</sup> Pemerintah R.I., *Undang-Undang No 14 Tahun 2005 Tentang Kompetensi Guru* (Jakarta: Sekretariat Negara, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Syamsudin Asyrofi, *Metodologi Pengajaran Bahasa Arab* (Yogyakarta: IdePress, 2010), p. 68.

<sup>27</sup> Carol Grbich, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2013), p. 92.

<sup>28</sup> Max Van Mannen, *Researching Lived Experience* (London, Ontario: Althouse, 2003), pp. 77-80.

<sup>29</sup> W. Laurence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2007), pp. 106-108.

<sup>30</sup> Charles J. Stewart and William B. Cash, Jr., *Interviewing: Principles and Practices* (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2013), p. 324.

then given to the students was open-ended, in which questions are presented in such a way that each respondent can provide answers according to their wishes and circumstances, and with ample room for writing such responses. This questionnaire sought to find out the obstacles the students may have experienced in learning *mahārah kalām*.

After the process of collecting data and information, both from the interviews and the questionnaires, the researchers applied data analysis and interpretation. This stage of the study used the steps of data analysis as follows: displaying the data, classifying the data, and then analyzing the data, so as to produce and report the research results.

## D. DISCUSSION

### 1. Problematic Factors in the Activity of Learning Speaking Skills (*Mahārah Kalām*) in Arabic

Problems experienced by the students in acquiring *kalām* skills included five general factors, which are listed below as a, b, c, d, e, along with further enumeration of the daunting aspects of each factor:<sup>31</sup>

#### a. Being Nervous About Speaking

##### (1) Worry About Making Mistakes

According to the data that the researchers documented, students were worried about their speaking ability, and some students even did not dare to speak, due to lack of confidence and because they were not used to pronunciations or vocabulary and were afraid to make mistakes; also because they were novices in the structure of sentences and the mastery of words.

##### (2) Fear of Criticism

According to the data collected, students were afraid of being criticized by listeners if, when speaking Arabic, there would be something said that was in error or inappropriate; also, they were afraid to speak because some students were not used vocalizing all the Arabic characteristic sounds.

##### (3) Lack of Confidence

According to the data, students were not confident or did not have the courage to speak because they were not used to using Arabic, so they dreaded making mistakes and felt that listeners would not understand what was being said.

##### (4) Weakness in Composing Sentences (*Qawā'id* and *Tarākib*)

According to the data obtained by the researchers, students were weak in sentence structure (*qawaid*) and sentence structure (*tarakib*) because some students had never studied

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<sup>31</sup>Abd. Wahab Rosyidi dan Mamlu'atul Ni'mah, *Memahami Konsep Dasar Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Malang: UIN Maliki Press, 2012), p. 90.



grammar (*nahwu* and *sharf*) or sentence structure in their previous education. So that had an impact on their ability to confidently speak Arabic.

(5) Having Relatively Small Vocabulary

Students in terms of mastery of their vocabulary were still lacking, so when they wanted to make sentences or speak they had difficulty because vocabulary is very important for speaking skill. If they did not know much vocabulary then automatically they would not know the words for what they could talk about.

b. Students Find Nothing to Talk Confidently

(1) Cannot Think of What to Say

As the data documented, the students could not think of what to say or they were confused about what to say. The cause in some instances was being weak in vocabulary, or at other times it was not having sufficient knowledge of a topic to be able to also express it in Arabic.

(2) Lack of Motivation or Enthusiasm for Topic

According to the data gathered, students at times had no motivation to express what they felt. In these cases, they were less active or even lazy about speaking Arabic. In the environment during learning they were passive, and most students also did not try to use Arabic in their daily speaking.

c. Lack of Participation from Other Students

According to the research data, this inhibitor was seen when some students tended to dominate in class participation, and thus others spoke less often. This usually happened due to differences in the previous educational background of students. There are students, for example, who come from SMA, SMK, MA and Islamic boarding schools and thus their preexisting abilities differed.

d. Feeling Awkward in Speaking a Foreign Language

According to the data that the researchers got, most of the students still use their mother tongue, they are not used to speaking foreign languages including Arabic, so speaking Arabic is difficult and they find it difficult.

e. Lack of Language Environment (*Bi'ah Lughawiyah*)

According to the data that the researchers got, all students said that because of the limited alternative language environment, both during learning and generally on campus, students had scant occasions to become accustomed to speaking Arabic. They felt that if the language environment included more Arabic active, they would be more enthusiastic about trying to speak Arabic.

Based on the responses gathered via the questionnaires and interviews, the researchers found the prominent difficulties and obstacles hindering students from mastering Arabic speaking skills. These difficulties arose from two sources, namely the linguistic factor and the non-linguistic factors. The following summary describes and elucidates these results.

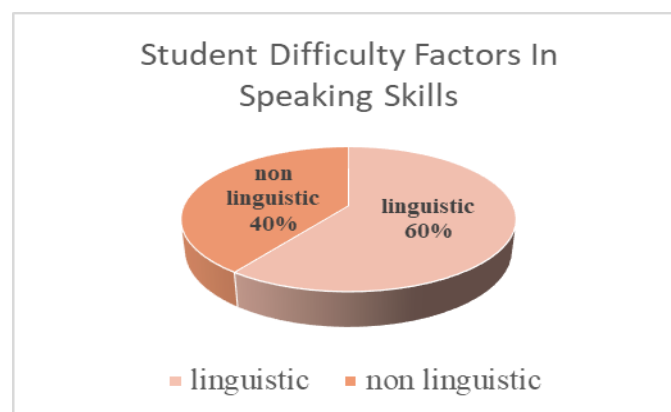
(1) Linguistic Factor

The linguistics factor was one the obstacles for Arabic language learners, and among all the students in this study sample, there were 60% who lacked in linguistic skills. Problematic aspects of such skills, or of a lack of practice, included *ashwāt* (sound system) pronunciation and *qawaid* (grammar) difficulty. These are related to formation of words (*sharfīyyah*) and sentences (*nahwīyyah*), as well as to structural (*tarākib*) difficulties, and types of sentences, such as *ismiyyah* (noun phrase) and *fi'liyyah* (verbal phrases).

(2) Non-linguistic Factors

Non-linguistic factors do not result from the Arabic language itself, but rather are related to psychology and to teaching methods. The psychological difficulties in question include motivation (*dawafī'i*) and interest (*myyul*) in learning Arabic. Of all the students who were sampled in this study, there were 40% who lacked confidence, had a language environment that was less supportive, encountered weak teaching methods, or lack of the opportunity for the students to practice speaking. Other non-linguistic factors were the differences in the educational backgrounds of students and the fact that for some students, the situation of doing study in the Arabic language education department had not been their preferred choice.

Chart 1. Students with Difficulty in Speaking Skills



## 2. Improving Speaking Ability among Arabic Language Education Students

Efforts made by students to improve their speaking skills in Arabic were: forging their own intention and motivation to learn, increasing vocabulary memorization, frequent practicing of sentences that are of daily use, practicing speaking with peers using Arabic, having textual and

contextual conversations including the utilization of audiovisual resources (such as YouTube), enthusiastically participating in the activities in the Arabic language education department, especially those for training *mahārah kalām*.

Efforts made by lecturers, and by campuses offering majors in Arabic language education, to improve students' speaking skills in Arabic were: implementing *bi'ah lughawiyah*, which are compulsory language programs two days a week, typically Monday and Thursday; having *mufradah* boards and language *ushlub*; using learning media; requiring students to memorize 20 vocabulary items related to each topic of learning; using a dictionary for acquiring appropriate vocabulary; preparing sentences, and correcting them for structure, grammar, and vocabulary; and giving suggestions for students to watch youtube channels having Arabic learning content, especially involving conversational practice (*kalām*).

Efforts are being made to improve students' speaking skills. These efforts attempt to motivate intention, provide memory training, encourage speaking practice, implement learning from texts and contextual settings, and being active in Arabic activities. To remove various obstacles, we recommend that lecturers create a language environment (*bi'ah lughawiyah*) that stimulates speaking,<sup>32</sup> in which there is an obligation to create daily language programs, to promoted the use of media to develop word recognition and practical sentence forms, and to benefit from the use of Youtube for exposure to the spoken language.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The researchers found difficulties or inhibiting factors affecting students in developing their *mahārah kalām*. These factors were both linguistic and non-linguistic. The linguistic factors were consists of lack of sufficient useful vocabulary, lack of confident knowledge of grammar (*qawā'id*) and sentence structure (*tarā'ib*). The non-linguistic factors were those that come from outside the language itself, such as motivation, a sparse or inactive language environment, lack of confidence to speak, fear that the listener will not understand, and too rarely practicing speaking. Two other inhibiting factors for the students' *mahārah kalām* in the Arabic language education department were that not all Arabic language education students had chosen Arabic education as their top preference and that students' educational backgrounds were variously different in nature and extent.

Efforts are being made by the lecturers, and in the policies of the Arabic language education department, to improve students' ability to speak Arabic. These include applying *bi'ah lughawiyah*, which is a compulsory language program two days per week, on Mondays and

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<sup>32</sup> Alice Omaggio Hadley, *Teaching Language in Context* (Boston, MA: Heinle and Henle, 2003).

Thursdays; posting *mufradah* boards and language uslub or language patterns; using learning media; requiring students to memorize 20 vocabulary items related to the topic of learning; using a dictionary for learning appropriately useful vocabulary; applying new vocabulary in the preparation of sentences; correcting sentences for their structure, grammar, and vocabulary; and watching YouTube channels for Arabic learning content, especially conversation (*kalām*), so that students can actively and more fully acquire and improve their *mahārah kalām* skills.

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