



Analysis of the Potential for Speaking Anxiety in the Grade IX Arabic Textbook for Islamic Junior High Schools (MTs): The Dominance of Grammatical Aspects and Its Implications for Students' Willingness to Speak

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Abstract

Arabic speaking instruction (*mahārah kalām*) at the *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (MTs) level is ideally directed toward the development of students' communicative competence. In practice, however, many students still experience psychological barriers in the form of speaking anxiety, which hinder their willingness to speak. This study aims to analyze the Grade IX Arabic textbook published by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2020 by identifying its dominance of grammatical aspects, analyzing its potential contribution to speaking anxiety, and formulating its pedagogical implications. Employing a library research design with a qualitative content analysis approach, data were gathered through documentation and close reading of the textbook, alongside relevant psycholinguistic literature. The findings reveal a significant structural imbalance, where a structural-grammatical orientation dominates through deductive presentation of *taṣhrīf* materials, mechanical sentence transformation exercises, and accuracy-based evaluation. Conversely, support for spontaneous oral communication remains limited and text-reproductive. Psycholinguistic, this rigid design triggers a fear of negative evaluation, a heightened affective filter, and double cognitive load. Consequently, the textbook's grammatical dominance potentially exacerbates speaking anxiety. Therefore, instructional materials need reconstruction by integrating grammar inductively and expanding functional communicative activities.

Keywords: Arabic Textbook, *Mahārah Kalām*, Speaking Anxiety, Psycholinguistics

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Article History	Received	Revised	Accepted	Published
	2026-07-10	2026-07-29	2026-08-09	2026-09-15

INTRODUCTION

مقدمة

Arabic language learning is not merely intended to equip students with knowledge of linguistic rules such as *naḥwu*, *ṣarf*, and vocabulary mastery (Muradi, 2014; Rohman, 2026), but is also directed toward enabling learners to use Arabic as a means of communication in various social contexts (Khotimah et al., 2024; A. S. Said & Fadjri, 2025). Within this framework, *mahārah kalām* occupies a central position because it is directly related to the ability to express ideas, opinions, and feelings orally in the target language (Adah & Bakar, 2025; N. I. Islam et al., 2025; Yuristira et al., 2025). Speaking ability also constitutes an essential component of communicative competence, namely the ability to use language appropriately according to context rather than merely producing grammatically correct utterances (Sholahudin et al., 2025). Therefore, Arabic language instruction should not be confined to linguistic accuracy alone, but should also provide space for the development of students' speaking confidence so that they are willing and able to

use Arabic in everyday communication (Jannah & Rodiah, 2025; A. saad Said & Saleh, 2025).

Nevertheless, Arabic language instruction at the *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (MTs) level frequently reflects a different orientation from this communicative ideal. A number of recent studies indicate that Arabic teaching at MTs still tends to emphasize structural aspects of language, such as *i'rāb*, *tashrīf*, *nahwu*, and *qawā'id*, through exercises focusing on word-form transformation, structural analysis, and rule-based problem solving (Afjalurrahmansyah et al., 2025; B. Islam & Handriawan, 2025; Lubis & Mavianti, 2024; Maulida et al., 2025; Nur & Hasanah, 2025). Such an approach certainly plays an important role in providing learners with a linguistic foundation. However, when instruction relies too heavily on grammatical accuracy, students' opportunities to use Arabic communicatively become increasingly limited. As a result, many learners may understand language rules relatively well yet still feel hesitant, afraid of making mistakes, or lacking in confidence when required to speak Arabic (Mufrihani & Royani, 2025; Nurpadilah et al., 2026). This condition reveals a gap between the ideal communicative orientation of Arabic instruction and classroom practices that remain predominantly structural in nature.

Textbooks function not only as sources of learning materials but also as pedagogical instruments that shape classroom interaction, learning activities, and the language skills emphasized during instruction (Azkiyah et al., 2025; Utami et al., 2025). Teachers frequently organize instruction according to the sequence of materials and exercises provided in textbooks. Consequently, when textbooks predominantly emphasize grammatical accuracy through activities such as *tashrīf*, sentence transformation, and gap-filling exercises, classroom practices also become structurally oriented, while opportunities for spontaneous oral communication remain limited (Khalina et al., 2025). A preliminary examination of the Grade IX Arabic textbook for MTs (2020) published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia reveals this tendency. Although speaking activities are included, they are largely restricted to scripted dialogues, providing limited opportunities for authentic communication. Such instructional conditions may expose students to linguistic pressure before sufficient speaking confidence has been established, causing Arabic speaking to be perceived as a stressful rather than a communicative activity (Norlaila et al., 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, this condition can be explained through psycholinguistic and affective approaches to language learning. When learners are required to perform speaking tasks in an instructional environment that places excessive emphasis on correction, formal accuracy, and error evaluation, their attention is no longer fully directed toward meaning-making, but is instead divided by the need to monitor the correctness of linguistic forms. This condition may trigger fear of error, apprehension about negative evaluation, an elevated affective filter, and a double cognitive load that ultimately inhibits speaking performance. In other words, speaking anxiety in Arabic language learning should not be understood solely as an individual psychological problem, but also as a phenomenon that may be shaped by instructional design and the structure of teaching materials.

Previous studies consistently indicate that speaking anxiety remains a major challenge in Arabic language learning. Shahrudin (2024) reported that learners experienced high levels of speaking anxiety, particularly due to fear of speaking without preparation and concern about negative evaluation. Likewise, Amrulloh et al. (2026) found that speaking anxiety was associated with fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and dependence on teacher support, whereas communicative learning environments enhanced students' speaking self-efficacy. Similarly, Kholifia et al. (2025) demonstrated that communicative classroom activities could reduce

speaking anxiety by providing learners with more authentic opportunities for oral interaction. Collectively, these findings suggest that speaking anxiety is influenced not only by learners' internal characteristics but also by the instructional environment in which speaking takes place.

Although previous studies have provided important insights into speaking anxiety in Arabic language learning, most of them have focused primarily on learners' internal factors, such as fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, or lack of speaking readiness. Studies that position teaching materials particularly official Arabic textbooks used at the MTs level as structural factors potentially contributing to the emergence of speaking anxiety remain relatively limited. This is noteworthy because textbooks play a crucial role in determining the direction of instruction, the types of activities in which students engage, and the balance between grammatical orientation and communicative orientation. Accordingly, there is a clear research gap between earlier studies that have predominantly examined speaking anxiety from the psychological perspective of learners and the need to investigate speaking anxiety from a structural-pedagogical perspective, particularly through an analysis of the content of officially used textbooks.

Despite these findings, previous studies have primarily examined speaking anxiety from the perspective of learners' psychological characteristics, such as fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and speaking readiness. Limited attention has been paid to the possible contribution of teaching materials, particularly officially prescribed Arabic textbooks, as structural factors that may shape speaking anxiety. This study addresses this gap by examining the dominance of grammatical content in the Grade IX Arabic textbook for MTs published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2020) and exploring its potential relationship with speaking anxiety. By positioning speaking anxiety within a structural-pedagogical framework rather than solely an individual psychological perspective, this study contributes to the evaluation and development of more communicative Arabic teaching materials.

On that basis, this study aims to: (1) identify the dominance of grammatical aspects in the Grade IX Arabic textbook for MTs published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020, (2) analyze the potential relationship between such dominance and the emergence of speaking anxiety among students, and (3) formulate pedagogical implications for the development of Arabic teaching materials that are more communicative and more supportive of *mahārah kalām*. Through this investigation, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the extent to which the structure of materials, the forms of exercises, and the pedagogical orientation embedded in a textbook may influence students' psychological readiness to use Arabic orally.

METHOD

منهج

This study employed a library research design using a qualitative approach and qualitative content analysis as the primary method of inquiry. Library research was selected because the study focused on analyzing documentary data rather than involving human participants, with the objective of interpreting the content and pedagogical orientation of an officially prescribed Arabic language textbook. This design is appropriate for studies that seek to examine written documents systematically in order to understand educational phenomena and generate conceptual interpretations (George, 2008; Snyder, 2019). Furthermore, qualitative content analysis was adopted because it enables researchers to identify patterns, classify textual data into analytical categories, and interpret meanings embedded in documents in a systematic and transparent manner (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Schreier, 2012).

This study did not involve a population or sample because it was document-based research. Instead, the research object consisted of the Grade IX Arabic textbook for Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020, which served as the primary source of analysis. Primary data comprised all instructional content contained in the textbook, whereas secondary data consisted of books, scholarly articles, and previous studies concerning speaking anxiety, Arabic language pedagogy, communicative language teaching, textbook analysis, and psycholinguistic theories relevant to the study.

The units of analysis included (1) learning objectives, (2) grammatical materials (*qawā'id*), (3) vocabulary presentation, (4) exercise types, (5) speaking activities, (6) dialogue forms, and (7) communicative learning tasks presented throughout the textbook. These units were selected because they represent the principal instructional components that potentially influence opportunities for communicative language use and the development of students' speaking confidence.

Data were collected through the documentation technique, which is widely employed in document-based qualitative research to examine written materials systematically (Bowen, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2016). The researcher carefully read the entire textbook and recorded all relevant data using a documentation sheet and a data categorization form developed according to the objectives of the study. During this process, each instructional unit was examined and classified based on predetermined analytical categories before being interpreted in relation to the theoretical framework of speaking anxiety and communicative language teaching.

To enhance analytical consistency, this study employed a coding framework consisting of four analytical categories with explicit operational indicators, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Coding Framework for Document Analysis

Analytical Category	Operational Indicators
Grammatical dominance	Presentation of <i>qawā'id</i> , <i>nahwu</i> , <i>ṣharf</i> , <i>taṣrīf</i> , <i>i'rāb</i> , sentence transformation, grammar explanation, rule-based exercises
Mechanical drills	Fill-in-the-blank exercises, substitution drills, repetition drills, matching exercises, sentence transformation, controlled written exercises
Guided speaking activities	Scripted dialogues, memorization tasks, model-based question–answer activities, pronunciation practice, guided oral practice
Communicative speaking activities	Role play, pair work, group discussion, information-gap activities, opinion sharing, problem-solving tasks, spontaneous oral interaction

The primary research instruments consisted of a documentation sheet and a document analysis matrix, which were used to record and organize data systematically. The format of the instrument is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Document Analysis Instrument

Unit of Analysis	Textbook Content	Analytical Category	Indicator	Researcher's Notes
Learning objective				
Grammar material				
Vocabulary				
Exercise type				
Speaking activity				
Dialogue				
Communicative task				

Following the coding process, all categorized data were reviewed through expert judgment involving one expert in Arabic language education with over 10 years of research and teaching experience in Arabic language pedagogy. The expert independently evaluated the appropriateness, consistency, and pedagogical relevance of the coding and interpretations. This

procedure was conducted to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings by ensuring that the analytical classifications accurately reflected the instructional characteristics of the textbook (Guba & Lincoln, 1982).

The data were analyzed manually without qualitative data analysis software using the qualitative content analysis procedure, while the stages of analysis followed the interactive analytical process proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The analysis consisted of four stages: data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, only data relevant to the research objectives were selected. The categorization stage involved coding every unit of analysis into the four analytical categories presented in Table 1. In the interpretation stage, the categorized data were interpreted using theories of communicative language teaching, Arabic language pedagogy, and speaking anxiety to explain how grammatical dominance in the textbook might influence opportunities for oral communication. Finally, the conclusion drawing stage synthesized all findings to formulate pedagogical implications regarding the development of more communicative Arabic language teaching materials and their potential contribution to reducing speaking anxiety among learners.



Figure 1. Analytical Process by Miles & Huberman

RESULT | نتائج

The content analysis of the Arabic Language Textbook for Grade IX of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020, yielded three major findings. First, the textbook demonstrates a clear dominance of grammatical orientation, as reflected in its chapter structure, learning objectives, presentation of *qawā'id* and *tashrīf* materials, and exercise formats that prioritize structural accuracy. Second, although the textbook provides speaking sections through *al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah jamā'iyyan* and *al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah fardiyyan*, these activities remain largely confined to guided and reproductive speaking tasks that depend on prompts, models, and pre-structured responses. Third, the combination of structurally oriented exercises, accuracy-based evaluation, and the limited availability of spontaneous speaking tasks suggests the presence of instructional conditions that may not sufficiently support students' speaking confidence and oral spontaneity.

To make these findings more explicit, the evidence derived from the textbook analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Evidence of Grammatical Dominance, Limited Speaking Support, and Instructional Indicators in the Arabic Language Textbook for Grade IX MTs

No	Chapter/Page	Evidence from the Textbook	Category of Finding	Analytical Indication
1	Analytical Indication	Each chapter is systematically arranged according to the sequence <i>al-mufradāt</i> → <i>taqdīm al-naṣh</i> → <i>fahm al-naṣh wa al-tarākīb</i> → <i>al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah jamā'iyyan</i> → <i>al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah fardiyyan</i>	Learning structure oriented toward linguistic elements and guided practice	The recurrent placement of <i>fahm al-naṣh wa al-tarākīb</i> indicates the centrality of structural comprehension within the learning sequence

2	Chapter I – <i>Ra's al-Sanah al-Hijriyyah</i>	The basic competency links oral expression about past events to the target of conjugating simple past verbs (<i>taṣhrīf al-fi'l al-mādhī al-mujarrad</i>)	Grammatical dominance in learning objectives	Communicative content is framed through the mastery of a specific grammatical form
3	Chapter II – <i>al-Ḥafl bi Mawlid al-Rasūl</i>	The learning objective is directly associated with the use of <i>kāna</i> and its noun and predicate (<i>kāna wa ismuhā wa khabaruhā al-mufrad</i>)	Grammatical dominance in competency formulation	Grammatical structures function as a core target of chapter-level learning
4	Chapter IV – <i>Jamāl al-Ṭabī'ah</i>	Speech acts related to giving instructions are explicitly connected to the imperative verb and its conjugation (<i>fi'l al-amr wa taṣrīfuh</i>)	Integration of language function with <i>ṣharf/nahwu</i> targets	Oral language use remains closely tied to formal grammatical patterns
5	Chapter I, pp. 10–11	The textbook presents past-tense verbs (<i>fi'l mādhī</i>) together with temporal markers and full conjugation tables across pronouns	Dominance of <i>qawā'id</i> and <i>taṣhrīf</i> materials	Verb transformation is positioned as a major focus of learning
6	Chapter I, subsequent exercises	Students are instructed to observe and complete verb forms such as <i>ḥaḍḥa, waṣhala, taraka, mana'a, waḍha'a, sami'a</i> according to pronoun patterns	Mechanical drills / form transformation	Exercises emphasize formal manipulation rather than the free production of meaning
7	Chapter III / evaluation section	The textbook includes tasks labeled " <i>Taṣhrīflah!</i> ", requiring students to transform verbs such as <i>ḥaḍhara, tashāraka, yatabādalū, yatazawwaj</i> into different forms	Dominance of <i>taṣhrīf</i> -based exercises	Morphological transformation constitutes a central component of the assessment
8	End-of-chapter / semester evaluation	Assessment tasks include multiple-choice questions, completion tasks, sentence arrangement, and selecting correct forms	Accuracy-based evaluation	Assessment privileges linguistic correctness over communicative performance
9	All chapters	Speaking sections are consistently provided through <i>al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah jamā'iyyan</i> and <i>al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah fardiyyan</i>	Formal availability of speaking support	The textbook formally allocates space for speaking, although the format remains highly guided
10	Chapter I, pp. 17–18	<i>Al-ta'bīr al-muwajjah al-fardiyy</i> provides guiding questions and narrative frames about Islamic New Year activities, such as <i>iḥṭafala bi dhikrā... fī al-tārīkh...</i>	Guided speaking / scripted production	Oral production is still dependent on pre-structured response frameworks
11	Chapter II, pp. 28–30 Chapters III–IV and subsequent units	Activities include dialogues on Mawlid celebrations, sequencing event programs, model-based question–answer tasks, and sentence arrangement	Reproductive speaking tasks	Speaking activities largely require students to reproduce information from texts or dialogues

12	Chapters III–IV and subsequent units	Speaking activities are positioned after reading and grammar sections, making them an extension of prior language exercises	Non-autonomous speaking practice	Speaking functions as a follow-up to structural learning rather than as an independent communicative activity
13	General pattern of exercises	Many tasks require a single correct answer, such as selecting correct forms, filling blanks, and arranging words into correct sentences	Emphasis on accuracy	Success is predominantly measured through correctness of form
14	Pattern of speaking tasks	Speaking activities are restricted by models, information lists, and predetermined response patterns	Limited room for improvisation	The textbook offers minimal opportunity for spontaneous oral expression and communicative variation
15	Cross-chapter synthesis	Communicative themes such as <i>Ra's al-Sanah al-Hijriyyah</i> , <i>al-Hafl bi Mawlid al-Rasul</i> , and <i>Jamāl al-Ṭabī'ah</i> are more often used as contexts for structural exercises	Imbalance between communicative themes and exercise orientation	Language is positioned more as a formal system to be mastered than as a medium of oral communication

Taken together, the evidence indicates that the Arabic Language Textbook for Grade IX MTs foregrounds grammatical instruction as its dominant pedagogical orientation. This tendency is visible in the organization of chapters, formulation of learning objectives, presentation of qawā'id and tashrīf materials, exercise design, and evaluation patterns, all of which emphasize structural accuracy. By contrast, support for mahārah kalām is formally present but pedagogically limited, as speaking activities remain largely guided, text-bound, and reproductive. Overall, the findings suggest a clear imbalance between the prominence of grammatical exercises and the development of communicative speaking competence, indicating that the textbook may not optimally support students' confidence and readiness to use Arabic orally.

Based on the empirical evidence presented in Table 3, it is evident that the design of the Grade IX MTs Arabic textbook is heavily dominated by a grammatical approach (qawā'id) and mechanical drills (taṣrīf), which marginalizes opportunities for authentic communication. However, a deeper analysis reveals that this structural dominance is further compounded by another crucial issue: technical and linguistic inaccuracies within the presented materials.

Below is the inventory of Arabic textual errors identified in the textbook draft to serve as supporting evidence:

Table 4. Inventory of Arabic Textual Errors in the Grade IX MTs Arabic Textbook

No	Chapter / Page	Original Text (Flaw / Typo)	Arabic Text Correction (Fusha Rules)	Error Category & Grammatical Explanation
1	Ch. I / p. 9	أَبَا بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ...	أَبَا بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ...	Diacritics & Tanwin: Incorrect placement of tanwin/fathatain on the proper noun (أَبَا بَكْرٍ) in the draft print.
2	Ch. II / p. 24	سِتُّ سِنِينَ...ثَلَاثَ	سِتُّ سَنَوَاتٍ... (سِتُّ سِنِينَ)	'Adad & Ma'dud Rules: Incorrect accusative case (<i>manshub</i>) usage for decade numbers

		ثَلَاثًا وَسِتِّينَ سَنَةً	وَسِتُّونَ سَنَةً...	(ثَلَاثًا وَسِتِّينَ) following kaana ('uqud)
3	Ch. III / pp. 38–39	مَا أَنَا بِقَارِيٍّ: لَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا كَانَ أُمِّيًّا...	مَا أَنَا بِقَارِيٍّ، لَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا كَانَ أُمِّيًّا...	Orthography & Ism Anna: Truncated <i>hamzah in biqaari'in</i> , and the name <i>Muhammadan</i> should be in the accusative case (<i>manshub</i>) as <i>Ism 'Anna</i> .
4	Ch. V / p. 73	الَّذِي سَقَى بِهِ... النَّبَاتَاتِ...	الَّذِي أَسْقَى بِهِ النَّبَاتَاتِ...	Lexical Diction: Using the verb <i>saqaa</i> (سَقَى) is more precise for natural plant watering compared to <i>asqaa</i> .
5	Ch. VI / p. 87	رُمِي النَّفَايَاتِ... فِي النَّهْرِ...	رُمِي النَّفَايَاتِ فِي النَّهْرِ...	Typographical Misspelling: Letter swapping between <i>Taa</i> (ت) and <i>Nuun</i> (ن) in the word <i>al-nafaayaat</i> (النفايات).
6	Ch. I / p. 12 (Tarkib)	Complete: / وَصَلْنَ / تَرَكُّنُمْ / مَنَعْنُمَا / جَعَلْنُ / قُلْنَا... (Full conjugation)	Incomplete/blank past tense conjugation table.	Material Incompleteness: The drill table lacked precise pronoun conjugation answer keys.
7	Ch. VI / p. 95 (Tartib)	يَجِبُ عَلَيْنَا: أَلَا تُلَوِّثُ مَاءَ النَّهْرِ بِالنَّفَايَاتِ	Confusing word order for student reordering.	Sentence Structure: Adjustment of the particle <i>An + Laa (Alla)</i> positioning to prevent student confusion.

These findings reinforce the empirical evidence that the textbook not only suffers from a methodological imbalance in supporting productive language skills (specifically *mahārah al-kalām* / speaking skills), but also lacks rigor in maintaining the accuracy and validity of its linguistic models. In language acquisition, presenting flawed textual examples within a grammar-centric textbook risks inducing the fossilization of errors among learners. Consequently, these results highlight the urgent need for a comprehensive revision encompassing both the rebalancing of communicative activities and rigorous linguistic proofreading.

DISCUSSION | مناقشة

The qualitative content analysis of the Arabic Language Textbook for Grade IX of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) 2020 reveals a structural imbalance between the dominance of grammatical materials and the limited availability of communicative speaking practice. This imbalance is visible in the recurrent emphasis on *tashrīf*, sentence transformation, and accuracy-based exercises, while speaking tasks are mostly presented in guided and text-dependent formats. As a result, the textbook tends to position Arabic not primarily as a medium of communication, but as a system of linguistic forms to be mastered.

This instructional pattern has important implications for the development of *mahārah kalām*. Although grammar remains an essential component of Arabic learning, its excessive dominance may reduce students' opportunities to use the language meaningfully and spontaneously. In the textbook under study, speaking sections are indeed available, yet they largely take the form of scripted dialogues, guided responses, and oral reproduction of written material. Such activities may help students practice pronunciation and sentence patterns, but they do not sufficiently train learners to construct ideas independently, negotiate meaning, or respond spontaneously in real communication. Consequently, speaking practice is present only in a limited and controlled sense, rather than as an autonomous communicative skill (Marsevani et al., 2025; Pilan et al., 2024; Rahmattullah et al., 2025).

From a psycholinguistic perspective, this imbalance may contribute to the emergence of

speaking anxiety. When oral performance is consistently framed through grammatical correctness, students may come to perceive speaking as an activity that is highly vulnerable to error and evaluation. In this situation, attention is divided between expressing meaning and monitoring linguistic accuracy at the same time. Instead of focusing on what they want to say, students may become preoccupied with whether their utterances are grammatically acceptable. This condition can increase cognitive pressure during oral production and may trigger hesitation, long pauses, loss of fluency, or even refusal to speak. Such a condition is closely related to the concept of the Affective Filter, which explains that anxiety and pressure in language learning may obstruct learners' willingness and readiness to produce language (Khairina & Ardhiyanto, 2025; Krashen, 1982; Xiao, 2025). It is also consistent with psycholinguistic accounts of speech production, which emphasize that speaking requires simultaneous processes of conceptualization, lexical retrieval, and formulation, when grammatical monitoring is added excessively, the cognitive burden becomes heavier and may disrupt fluency (Levelt, 1992, 1993; Takizawa, 2024).

The findings also suggest that the limited availability of authentic speaking support may reinforce fear of making mistakes. Because most oral tasks in the textbook remain tightly structured, students are given very little room to experiment with language, make partial errors, and gradually build confidence through communicative use. As a result, speaking is experienced less as a natural communicative process and more as a performance that must meet formal standards of correctness. This tendency is pedagogically problematic, particularly for MTs students who are still in the early stages of developing oral confidence in Arabic. In this respect, the findings may also be interpreted through the lens of Fear of Negative Evaluation, in which learners become anxious because they anticipate negative judgments from teachers or peers when making linguistic errors during oral performance (Botes et al., 2022; Chen & Guo, 2026; Empuerto et al., 2025; Horwitz et al., 1986).

Therefore, the issue identified in this study is not the inclusion of grammar itself, but the disproportionate emphasis placed on grammatical accuracy at the expense of communicative speaking development. A more balanced textbook design is needed one that still introduces grammar as a linguistic foundation, but does so in ways that support communication rather than overshadow it. Speaking tasks should be expanded beyond scripted dialogue and guided drills toward more functional, interactive, and meaning-focused activities. In this way, Arabic textbooks can better support not only students' structural competence, but also their confidence, fluency, and willingness to speak (Absya et al., 2026; Drilon, 2025; Tauchid et al., 2026).

Notwithstanding the theoretical and pedagogical insights provided in this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. This research strictly examined a single Arabic language textbook for Grade IX published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) in 2020. Consequently, the findings and structural imbalances identified herein cannot be broadly generalized to Arabic textbooks produced by private publishers or those designated for other grade levels (e.g., Grades VII and VIII or Senior High/Madrasah Aliyah). Future studies are encouraged to conduct comparative analyses across diverse publishers, grade levels, and educational contexts to provide a more comprehensive picture of communicative language teaching integration in Arabic instructional materials.

CONCLUSION | خاتمة

This study demonstrates that the design of Arabic language teaching materials can play an

important role in shaping learners' readiness to engage in oral communication. Through a qualitative content analysis of the Arabic Language Textbook for Grade IX of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), the study identified a strong emphasis on grammatical and structural learning that is not yet balanced by sufficient opportunities for communicative language use. This instructional orientation suggests a potential connection between textbook content and the emergence of speaking anxiety, as learners may be encouraged to prioritize linguistic accuracy over communicative expression. The study therefore highlights the need to reconceptualize Arabic teaching materials at the MTs level by integrating grammar within meaningful communicative contexts and providing greater support for authentic speaking practice. Such an approach is expected not only to strengthen learners' linguistic competence but also to foster confidence, reduce psychological barriers to speaking, and support the development of mahārah kalām in a more communicative and learner-centered manner.

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