

The Issue Of Arabic Speaking Skills Among Malay Learners: What Is Missing?

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Abstract

The persistent challenges Malay learners face in acquiring Arabic speaking skills have been extensively studied for decades, yet practical solutions remain elusive. Previous research has approached this issue with the intent of solving it from various angles, including curriculum design, teaching methodologies, learning strategies, and extracurricular activities involving both educators and students, yet the problem persists essentially unchanged. This paper adopts a novel approach by examining the gaps in our efforts to address the issue. It seeks to identify where our strategies falter, what crucial elements are lacking, and where we should begin anew. Embracing the notion that returning to Arabic tradition may offer valuable insights, this study delves into Ibn Khaldun's concept of *malakah*, which emphasizes the practical and experiential dimensions of language mastery. This paper reevaluates prevailing pedagogical frameworks. The study highlights deficiencies in current approaches and proposes sensible, theory-driven solutions to enhance Arabic speaking proficiency among Malay learners.

Keywords: Arabic Language; *Malakah*; Speaking Skills; Teaching and Learning

INTRODUCTION

In many regions worldwide, from Southeast Asia to West Africa, Arabic was introduced as the language of Islam by missionaries, who sometimes were not native Arabic speakers but had received training in Islamic sciences in Arabic. This educational system, prevalent across the Islamic world, typically involves young children learning Arabic alongside reading and writing principles under the guidance of traditional teachers, primarily focusing on reciting religious texts, particularly the Quran. Subsequently, students progress to studying texts in a teacher's *majlis*. Many of these teachers have been educated within the same system, becoming proficient in reading and writing Arabic but often lacking fluency in spoken Arabic.

The Arabic language holds a significant position in the global linguistic landscape and has played a pivotal role throughout human history and civilization. With over 422 million Arabic speakers worldwide (Al-Muslim & Zamri Arifin, 2012), its importance cannot be overstated. In Malaysia, Arabic was introduced in the 14th century, concurrent with the spread of Islam. As the language of the Holy Quran, its mastery became essential for Muslims to engage directly with religious texts and scholarly interpretations (Rosnani, 2004:22). Early Islamic education in the Peninsular Malaysia, primarily focused on Quranic recitation and memorization, including exclusive instruction in Arabic alphabets,

leading to reported challenges in comprehension (Rosnani, 2004). Subsequently, *pondok* education, representing the next phase of traditional Malay learning, facilitated deeper engagement with Arabic texts to impart Islamic knowledge, emphasizing teaching methods like memorization, recitation, and copying (Rosnani, 2004). However, this traditional approach, prevalent even in *madrrasah* education, tended to prioritize receptive skills such as reading and comprehension over productive skills like writing and speaking, potentially neglecting holistic language proficiency (Versteegh, 2006:5). Such traditional practices persist in the teaching and learning of Arabic in Malaysia, as documented in studies by Tarmizi (1997), Ismail (1999), Anida (2003), Amilrudin (2003), Khalid (2004), Mohd. Zaidi (2005), Zawawi, Mohd. Sukki, Alif Redzuan, and Sanimah (2005), Siti Iqbal (2006), and Mat Taib (2006). These studies highlight the continued prevalence of methodologies such as reading, translation, and memorization in both school and higher education settings for Arabic language instruction. These methodologies have been identified as key contributors to the weakness in Arabic speaking skills among Malay learners. However, the question remains: are these rote learning methodologies truly the root cause of the problem?

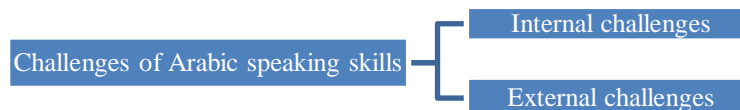
Arabic language instruction was introduced into Malaysian schools in 1957 following Malaysia's independence, primarily to facilitate understanding of primary Islamic sources such as the Quran and prophetic sayings. Over time, it was gradually integrated into all levels of the Malaysian education system to meet the growing demand for second language acquisition. Arabic became a compulsory subject in the syllabus of national secondary schools, as outlined in the Secondary School Standard Curriculum (KSSM) introduced in 2016 (Majdi, H.I. & Akmal Khuzairy, A.R., 2018; Siti Salwa Mohd Noor, Norasyikin Osman, Nurazan Mohamad Rouyan, Norhayati Che Hat & Khairon Nisak Mat Saad, 2021). The Ministry of Education, Malaysia (KPM), aims to cultivate communicative Arabic competence among learners at the secondary level. Additionally, higher education institutions offer various Arabic programs, including Teaching Arabic as a Second Language and Arabic Language and Literature, to cater to those seeking advanced proficiency in the language.

The challenge of Arabic speaking proficiency among Malay learners persists unabated. Numerous studies, including those by Tarmizi (1997), Ismail (1999), Anida (2003), Amilrudin (2003), Khalid (2004), Mohd. Zaidi (2005), Zawawi et al. (2005), Siti Iqbal (2006), and Mat Taib (2006), consistently demonstrate that the vast majority of Malay learners exhibit subpar Arabic speaking skills despite years of language study. Compounding the issue is its prevalence across various educational levels, from secondary schools to government and private religious institutions, as well as colleges and universities. Similar findings have been corroborated by subsequent researchers, including Ashinida (2012), Azani Ismail @ Yaakub, Azman Che Mat & Mat Taib Pa. (2012), Nadwah Daud & Nadhilah Abdul Pisal (2014), Mohammad Najib Jaffar, Zulkipli Isa, Wahida Mansor, Arnida A Bakar & Zainal Hajib. (2018), Nurwaina Rasit, and Zawawi Ismail. (2019), Mohd Ieruan Mohamed Mokhtar (2020), Siti Rohani Jasni, Suhaila Zailani & Hakim Zainal (2020), Siti Salwa Mohd Noor, Norasyikin Osman, Nurazan Mohamad Rouyan, Norhayati Che Hat & Khairon Nisak Mat Saad (2021), and Nurul Amalia Ruslan, Norhafizah Abd Kadir & Mohd Rusdan Hasan (2022).

The studies cited highlight several challenges faced by Malay learners in acquiring Arabic speaking skills. These challenges include a lack of practice, feelings of shyness and fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, absence of communication

partners, inadequate learning environments conducive to Arabic speaking, anxiety in speaking Arabic, deficiencies in grammar leading to difficulty in sentence construction, poor pronunciation, lack of motivation, insufficient vocabulary resulting in inaccurate language use, and difficulty recalling appropriate vocabulary. From these challenges, it can be discerned that Malay learners encounter two main types of obstacles in their Arabic speaking endeavours: internal challenges, such as anxiety, fear, and shyness, which emanate from within and are controllable; and external challenges, such as the absence of supportive environments and relevant resources, which originate externally and are beyond learners' control.

Figure 1 Challenges of Arabic Speaking Skills



In summary, the issue of Arabic speaking proficiency among Malay learners persists from the 1990s to the present day, with learners encountering the same challenges over time. Despite numerous studies and efforts to address these challenges through various means such as new instruction methods, curriculum enhancements, learning strategies, and extracurricular activities, the problem remains largely unresolved. Despite the introduction and adoption of these initiatives, they have proven to be less effective in improving Arabic speaking skills among Malay learners. Thus, the question arises: what crucial elements are missing, and where should interventions begin? Embracing the notion that a return to Arabic tradition may offer valuable insights, this study delves into Ibn Khaldun's concept of "malakah," which offers a nuanced discussion on Arabic language instruction aiming at examining the missing point in the process of teaching and learning of Arabic speaking skills among Malay learners.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach to examine two key aspects related to Arabic language acquisition among Malay learners. The first aspect explores the malakah theory, analyzing its underlying principles, operational mechanisms, and its effectiveness in facilitating language mastery. Through an in-depth review of the theory, this research aims to understand how malakah contributes to the development of Arabic language proficiency. The second aspect involves a critical examination of the current teaching and learning practices of Arabic among Malay learners. This study evaluates instructional methodologies, learning strategies, and pedagogical frameworks to identify existing gaps and challenges. By comparing these practices with the malakah theory, the research seeks to determine areas where the teaching and learning process falls short of achieving the desired language acquisition outcomes.

Data for this study are collected through document analysis, including scholarly literature, curriculum frameworks, and pedagogical case studies. A comparative analysis is conducted to highlight inconsistencies and inefficiencies in the existing methods, offering insights into potential improvements in Arabic language education for Malay learners. The findings of this research will contribute to the development of more effective teaching methodologies aligned with the malakah theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Language From Ibn Khaldun's Point of View

In his book "Muqaddimah," Ibn Khaldun (2004) defines language as the articulation of one's intentions through oral or spoken means.

"هي عبارة المتكلم عن مقصوده، وتلك العبارة فعل لسانی ناشئ عن القصد بإفادة الكلام، فلا بد أن تصير ملكة متقررة في العضو الفاعل لها، وهو اللسان، وهو في كل أمة بحسب اصطلاحاتهم."

He views language as a fundamental tool for communication, through which individuals convey their interests, emotions, thoughts, and more. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the uniqueness of each expression, tailored to the individual. Therefore, he underscores the importance of "*malakah*" or linguistic mastery, highlighting its crucial role in facilitating effective communication. It is also important to note that Ibn Khaldun prioritizes oral communication and speech over other productive language skills.

"وليس ذلك بالنظر إلى المفردات، وإنما بالنظر إلى التراكيب، فإذا حصلت الملكة التامة، في تركيب الألفاظ المفردة، للتعبير بها عن المعاني المقصودة، ومراعاة التأليف الذي يطبق الكلام على مقتضى الحال، بلغ المتكلم حينئذ الغاية من إفادة مقصوده للسامع، وهذا هو معنى البلاغة"

Ibn Khaldun (2004) further explains the concept of "*malakah*" extends beyond mere vocabulary quantity, emphasizing instead mastery of the language's structure. While vocabulary is important, relying solely on it can limit one's ability to fully articulate expressions. Effective communication necessitates a structured approach, where words and sentences are meticulously orchestrated and harmoniously arranged within the language's framework, ensuring proper context and coherence.

Understanding the "Malakah" Approach

The phrase "practice makes perfect" is a widely recognized motivational quote, encouraging individuals to strive for improvement in their pursuits. According to English dictionaries, it suggests that repeated practice leads to enhanced skill and eventual mastery. While this sentiment may appear aligned with Ibn Khaldun's concept of "*malakah*," a closer examination reveals a nuanced difference. While the English phrase emphasizes repetitive learning to develop and master a skill or knowledge, "*malakah*" encompasses an additional dimension: the integration of this proficiency into the individual's soul.

"معجم اللغة العربية المعاصرة ملكة [مفرد] : ج ملكات : صفة راسخة في النفس ، أو استعداد عقلي خاص لتناول أعمال معينة بذكاء ومهارة"

Dictionary of the Contemporary Arabic Language (2004) defines "*malakah*" as a well-established quality within the soul, denoting a special mental preparedness to approach certain tasks intelligently and skilfully. The phrase "*sifah raasikhah fi al-qalb*" conveys the notion of a deeply ingrained quality within the soul, characterized by permanence and steadfastness. Mastery, in this context, is the tangible outcome of this deeply rooted nature, solidified through relentless practice and repetition. Ibn Khaldun (as cited in Umi Machmudah, 2015) contends that "*malakah*" cannot be attained without the persistent repetition of actions until they become intrinsic to one's being. Through continuous practice and repetition, actions crystallize within the soul, becoming habitual in nature.

Ibn Khaldun interprets this as an assertion of ownership, opening the door to further refinement. Mastery or ownership of a skill, he suggests, requires undergoing a process of practice and repetition, which he terms as "*haal*" - a state necessitating ongoing efforts to fortify and fully develop the skill.

Figure 2 Stages of "*Malakah*"



Ibn Khaldun further elucidates this concept through the analogy of an individual well-versed in the theory of stitching but lacking the ability to execute it effectively. Similarly, in language learning, possessing knowledge of syntax without the capability to construct coherent paragraphs highlights a deficiency in achieving "*malakah*." Here, the focus shifts from syntax as the primary objective of language acquisition to its practical application in written and spoken expression. "*Malakah*" in language learning encompasses a holistic understanding of the language, surpassing the acquisition of linguistic theories and content. Language acquisition entails not only learning about the language but also using it as a medium for effective communication. This distinction underscores the disparity between passive knowledge acquisition and active language proficiency, which necessitates practical application.

Ibn Khaldun's observations extended to Andalusia, where he noted a unique approach to Arabic language acquisition. In this region, the educational curriculum emphasized the memorization of Arabic poems, idioms, and sentence structures. Remarkably, individuals in Andalusia exhibited a swifter attainment of "*malakah*" compared to their counterparts in Africa and Morocco. The key distinction lay in the perception of Arabic; while Andalusians viewed it as a skill to be mastered, others treated it primarily as a body of knowledge. Ibn Khaldun (2001) references prominent Andalusian figures such as Ibn Hayyan, Ibn Abdi Rabbih, al-Qasthaliy, Ibn Jabir, Ibn Bisyrin, and Ibn al-Jiya, all of whom achieved "*malakah*" in Arabic. He also highlights the significance of Sibawayh's work, which provides a comprehensive approach to learning Arabic through grammatical lessons, poems, prose, and idioms.

In "*Muqaddimah*," Ibn Khaldun (2001) describes the process of acquiring "*malakah*" in Arabic as emphasizing the foundational role of listening to native speakers and committing their expressions to memory. He asserts that mastery depends on the extent of memorization, the volume of information stored, and the quality of language memorized. Ibn Khaldun (2001) references several Muslim scholars who memorized Arabic poems and prose, underscoring the close connection between Arabic language learning and the art of memorization. Through this process, learners internalize vocabulary, refine their ability to select and arrange words skillfully, and apply them contextually, mirroring the fluency of native speakers.

Ibn Khaldun draws parallels between this method and the language acquisition process observed in children, who learn by listening, imitating, and repeating until language becomes second nature. Indeed, the process entails a degree of imitation of native speakers until it becomes ingrained as a habit. This underscores why memorization holds a central place in Arabic language learning, akin to a fundamental practice among Arabs. Harun Baharudin (2017) emphasizes the efficiency of imitation, or "*taqleed*" in Arabic

language acquisition, noting its ability to expedite learning through the emulation of established phrases with minimal effort and significant gains. Moreover, this approach plays a crucial role in preserving the language. As learners progress toward "*malakah*," they develop the ability to automatically discern errors or inaccuracies in sentences or phrases. This innate sense serves as a safeguard against incorrect language usage, stemming from the continuous cycle of listening, memorizing, repeating, and practicing. In essence, the attainment of "*malakah*" not only enhances language proficiency but also strengthens a natural defense mechanism against linguistic inaccuracies.

Ibn Khaldun's approach deeply resonates with the essence of the mind and soul, emphasizing that language acquisition should transcend mere surface-level understanding and become firmly entrenched. This underscores his emphasis on the practice of memorization within his pedagogical framework. Notably, his approach diverges somewhat from contemporary methods of second or foreign language learning. For instance, according to the National Capital Language Resource Center of the United States (NCLRC) (2009), the primary goal of foreign language teaching, including Arabic, in the United States is to achieve communication goals, with the desired outcome being the ability to communicate competently rather than exactly like a native speaker. A thorough analysis of the "*malakah*" approach reveals three fundamental processes: listening, memorizing, and practicing the language. These processes can be classified into three distinct stages of learning: INPUT, STORAGE, and OUTPUT. What distinguishes Ibn Khaldun's approach to language learning is its departure from a storage-centric model; instead, learners are compelled to showcase output as a tangible manifestation of the input and storage. This echoes the distinction between learning the language and learning about the language, underscoring the essential purpose of language as a medium for effective communication.



The Examination Of The Process Of Teaching And Learning Of Arabic Speaking Skill Among Malay Learners

1. The input Stage

Learners should have ample access to non-printed media to expose themselves to various aspects of the Arabic language, including videos, cartoons, songs, stories, films, classical movies, lectures, talks, news, and more. While the native environment plays a crucial role in language development, learners can create a conducive environment even in the absence of a native setting, with media serving as a valuable tool. Listening activities utilizing these media can be conducted in language labs, which are indispensable in institutions offering language programs. Especially for learners acquiring Arabic as a second language outside its native context, such as Malaysian students learning Arabic in Malaysia, language labs serve as crucial spaces for exposure to the native language. It is imperative to prioritize the restoration of language labs and dedicated listening skill classes. Exposure to native speakers is essential for learners to emulate the nuances of the Arabic language, with the materials used for this purpose holding significant importance, as learners tend to mimic what they hear. It is crucial that the Arabic language presented is of a standard or "*fusha*" nature, grammatically accurate, and free from other language influences. Regular and

frequent listening activities are necessary to ensure that the acquired language closely aligns with the linguistic standards intended for the learners.

Undoubtedly, adequate facilities to support optimal exposure to the Arabic language are indispensable, but they require funding. Consequently, not all schools and universities may be able to afford the necessary facilities. Even if they do, another challenge arises from poorly managed programs, resulting in outcomes that fall short of expectations. Nik Mohd Rahimi Nik Yusoff, Amran Abd Rahman, and Ahmad Zakuan Md Khudzari (2017) emphasize the significance of prioritizing Arabic listening skill classes. Their research advocates for the segregation of listening skill classes from other language skills, highlighting the importance of maintaining the quality of materials and equipment utilized by instructors, especially during examinations and tests. Furthermore, the assessment strategies devised for listening classes are deemed crucial, with an emphasis on their alignment with the objectives of the class.

It would have a significant impact if instructors could actively monitor and guide listening activities, enabling learners to maximize their benefits from using media. Previous studies have shown that there is no difference in media choice between proficient and non-proficient speakers of Arabic (Sueraya, 2010). Both groups tend to gravitate towards the same media for listening to Arabic language content. However, proficient speakers of Arabic go the extra mile to extract maximum value from the media, such as memorizing and repeatedly practicing phrases until they become ingrained, incorporating them into their communication, and even engaging in monologues. In contrast, less proficient speakers of Arabic typically limit their engagement to passive listening.

It is acknowledged that educators have embraced a variety of teaching methods, such as the direct method and the audio-lingual method, which prioritize active engagement in the teaching and learning processes and provide ample opportunities for practicing spoken Arabic without relying on translation. However, the most prevalent teaching method in Malaysia remains the Grammar Translation Method. While other communicative teaching methods like the direct method and the audio-lingual method are occasionally employed in classrooms, their utilization is not optimal. Often, what is referred to as a "communicative and student-centered classroom" is conducted in the first language or English. In contrast, the Grammar Translation Method, or "*nahu wa tarjamah*," focuses on the memorization of Arabic grammar and translation. This traditional approach involves the instructor presenting materials containing Arabic grammar, reading them aloud with the students, and translating them into their first language. Originating from teaching methods used for languages like Latin and Greek, this method prioritizes receptive skills over productive skills, providing a conventional framework for foreign language instruction. It could be concluded that the output stage is weak as the Arabic language lesson is taught in mixed language; Arabic language and the mother tongue.

In sum, it could be said that the input stage is weak as Malay learners are not much exposed to well managed and well-equipped Arabic language laboratories, selected and guided Arabic language materials for listening and speaking activities in the labs, relevant listening and speaking assessments and in the case of input in the classroom the Arabic instruction is mixed with the first language. All the above will seriously weaken the foundational stage of Arabic speaking skills.

2. The Storage Stage

Despite facing criticism in various studies as a form of rote learning and considered traditional, Ibn Khaldun staunchly advocates for the regular practice of memorization. In Ibn Khaldun's "*malakah*" approach, memorization is not an end in itself; rather, it serves to preserve and safeguard the integrity of the Arabic language.

He encourages learners to commit to memory the pure, authentic Arabic language derived from authoritative sources such as Quranic verses, hadiths, poems, prose, and various forms of Arabic literature. According to Ibn Khaldun, memorizing these materials enriches both the soul and the mind, laying the groundwork for the attainment of "*malakah*." Through active listening and memorization, learners not only acquire the appropriate vocabulary for specific meanings but also learn how to skillfully arrange them in phrases and employ them contextually. The memorized verses and phrases are not merely stored in the mind but are intended to be actively utilized. In essence, the "*malakah*" approach, by emphasizing memorization, serves as a safeguard for both the acquisition and expression of the language, ensuring dynamic and practical application of linguistic skills. It is evident that Malay learners do not struggle with memorization; in fact, it is intricately woven into the teaching and learning of the Arabic language. In religious schools, learners memorize selected Arabic language materials such as *sirah*, *fiqh*, *hadith*, Quranic verses, lines of poetry, and more. However, the issue arises when the memorized content is not further applied in practice. Instead, it remains confined within the learners without being actively utilized.

3. The Output Stage

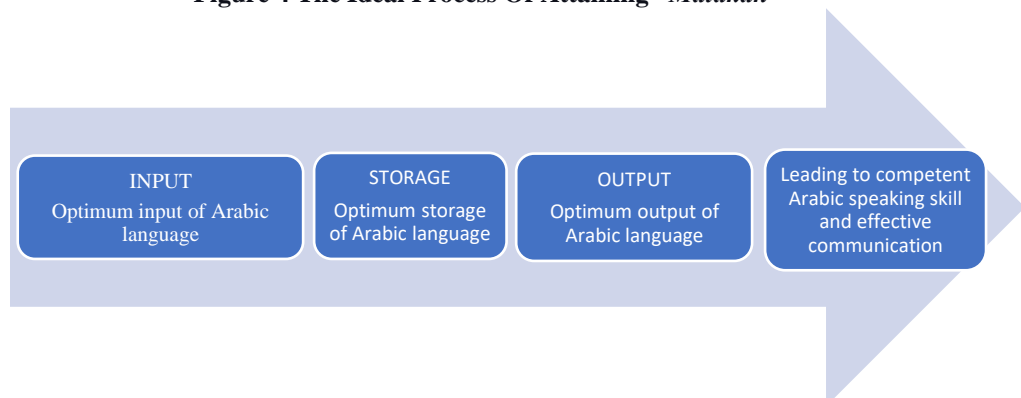
Ibn Khaldun suggests learners follow the footsteps of early Islamic scholars who sought knowledge through travel, known as "*rihlah*." He advises them to explore different places and seek guidance from respected teachers with solid knowledge. This approach resembles an immersion program, exposing learners to diverse learning environments and enriching their experiences. Implementing this aligns with Ibn Khaldun's belief in active exploration for deep knowledge acquisition. Institutions should actively promote and facilitate immersion programs for Arabic language learners, considering them highly effective. If not already in place, institutions should initiate such programs, with potential financial support from governmental or ministerial sources. Immersion programs immerse learners in countries where they can live, interact with native speakers, and use the language frequently. Though learners may initially struggle with communication, continuous exposure will lead to significant progress. Maximum exposure is crucial for linguistic aspects, as well as fluency, pronunciation, intonation, cultural nuances, and body language. Achieving this level of exposure indicates successful adoption of the language culture. Learners who struggle to communicate effectively with native speakers often have difficulty pronouncing Arabic words correctly. Therefore, immersion programs emerge as transformative strategies for comprehensive language development. Like language labs, immersion programs or student exchange programs demand significant funding and entail administrative processes such as establishing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). Consequently, not all schools or universities can afford to implement such programs, despite their effectiveness in exposing learners to authentic native language use.

Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun, in his book "*Muqaddimah*" (2004) advocates for oral discussion and dialogue, known as "*munaqashah*" and "*hiwar*" in Arabic, as general learning methods. He encourages learners to seek assistance when facing challenges or difficulties in comprehension, fostering a reduction in anxiety and an increase in self-confidence when speaking the new language. Enhancing proficiency in Arabic language can be achieved through various activities such as speaking,

expressing thoughts and opinions, discussions, forums, debates, monologues, dialogues, role-playing, presentations, and more. Among these, debates stand out as an activity that aligns well with the "*malakah*" approach due to its requirement for extensive speaking, delivery, and repetition (Nuraisyatul Khalila, 2023). However, as highlighted by Warul Walidi, AK (2000), the impact of debate and dialogue will be less effective if learners merely listen passively without active participation. Therefore, co-curricular activities, especially those involving oral Arabic communication like Arabic public speaking and oration, should be reinforced. This reinforcement, alongside Arabic debates, aims to maximize participation among Arabic language learners. Debate has gained more prominence compared to other oral activities. Presently, we witness debate competitions being organized by some schools and universities, offering another avenue for learners to practice Arabic language orally. However, this initiative demands proficient trainers in Arabic language, along with consistent training, which consumes considerable time, energy, and funding. Regrettably, other oral activities besides debate lack popularity and consequently receive less attention. In sum it could be said that the output stage also is weak as Malay learners are not widely exposed to opportunity to participate in programmes such as immersion and students exchange due to poor funding. As for the local level activities, it requires expertise, funding, time and energy to maintain those impactful co-curricular activities.

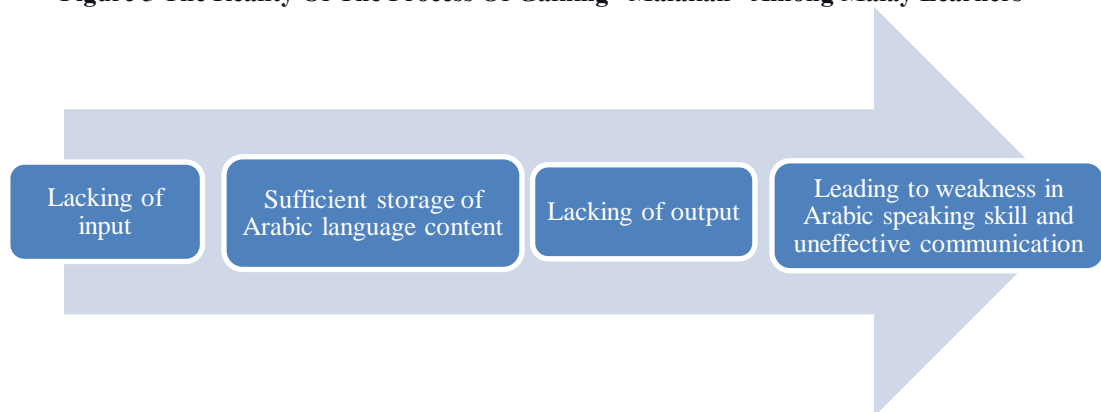
Three principles can be distilled from the theory: Firstly, Ibn Khaldun places Arabic language as a priority above other forms of knowledge. Secondly, according to Ibn Khaldun, the primary aim of language teaching and learning is to facilitate effective communication, whereby learners should attain competency in utilizing the language for communication purposes. Thirdly, Arabic language learning should adhere rigorously to three fundamental processes. A detailed analysis of the "*malakah*" approach identifies three fundamental processes: listening, memorization, and language practice. These processes align with three distinct learning stages: INPUT, STORAGE, and OUTPUT. What distinguishes Ibn Khaldun's method is its shift away from a storage-centric model; instead, learners are prompted to demonstrate output as a tangible reflection of input and storage. This underscores the distinction between acquiring language proficiency and acquiring knowledge about the language, highlighting language's primary function as a tool for effective communication. The process of achieving "*malakah*" can be succinctly summarized as follows:

Figure 4 The Ideal Process Of Attaining "*Malakah*"



From this perspective, it appears that our focus is primarily on the storage stage, with insufficient attention given to both input and output stages. While the fundamental components of the process are present, the manner in which they are executed is deficient and diverges from the ultimate goal: achieving competent communication in Arabic language. Malay learners often receive Arabic language instruction inadequately. While they have access to listening and reading materials in both printed and non-printed formats, the exposure is limited and not sufficiently extensive. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the necessity of extensive exposure to the Arabic language, particularly in non-Arabic environments. The presence of multiple languages in the learning environment can potentially hinder the acquisition of "*malakah*" by disrupting the language learning process. While memorization is prevalent among Malay learners, it often falls short of fulfilling Ibn Khaldun's intended objective. Ibn Khaldun advocates for the memorization of Arabic language to ensure its purity and authenticity, serving as a means to safeguard the language and promote its correct usage. However, Malay learners frequently engage in memorization solely for the sake of exams, with the stored information remaining stagnant without transitioning to the desired output. Thus, the memorized content should ideally serve as a pathway to subsequent actions, particularly meaningful output, which is often overlooked in practice. The subsequent process, language practice, presents the most significant challenge, as learners often lack sufficient opportunities to apply the language. This imbalance within the process hinders its effectiveness in achieving the intended purpose.

Figure 5 The Reality Of The Process Of Gaining "Malakah" Among Malay Learners



CONCLUSION

Ibn Khaldun's "*malakah*" approach to learning Arabic underscores language's fundamental role as a communication tool. He perceives language as a vehicle for expressing intentions and enabling effective communication. This method outlines a holistic process involving listening, memorization, and practice, representing input, storage, and output phases, respectively. Crucially, "*malakah*" emphasizes that language acquisition should extend beyond mere storage, aiming instead to facilitate seamless communication. Achieving "*malakah*" denotes the ability to skillfully select and employ words within sentences, ensuring contextual appropriateness and coherence. Indeed, the current situation deviates from the intended process of acquiring "*malakah*." While the fundamental steps are present, the emphasis is disproportionately placed on memorization alone. Malay learners would benefit from increased opportunities for both input and output.

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