Improving Students' Arabic Speaking Skills Through Flashcard-Based Peer Tutoring Method
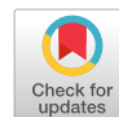
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ABSTRACT

The inadequate speaking abilities of class XI students in Arabic language learning at MA Khairul Ummah Batu Gajah present a challenge that necessitates an innovative and participatory solution. This study aims to assess the implementation and effectiveness of a peer tutoring method integrated with flashcard media to enhance students' speaking abilities. A quantitative research approach was employed, utilizing a quasi-experimental design. The study population comprised all 140 class XI students, with a sample of 28 students from class XI IPA II as the experimental group and 26 students from class XI IPA III as the control group. Data collection was conducted through tests. The analysis revealed that the t-count of 7.008 exceeded the t-table value of 2.01 at a 5% significance level, and the significance level (2-tailed) was 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Consequently, H_1 is accepted while H_0 is rejected. These results suggest the method fosters a more active, interactive, and collaborative learning environment. Therefore, this study advocates for the implementation of peer tutoring supported by visual media, such as flashcards, as an effective and engaging strategy for Arabic language instruction.

1. Introduction

Speaking Arabic in practice is not as easy as when someone speaks using their first language or mother tongue. In this case, students, especially language learners, have obstacles in speaking Arabic (Maidarlis et al., 2023). Difficulty in mastering speaking occurs due to many obstacles. Arabic speaking abilities require mastery of grammar and vocabulary, self-confidence, the ability to think quickly, and fluency in conveying ideas spontaneously. In contrast, various factors such as limited vocabulary, weak sentence structure, pronunciation difficulties, low interest in learning, conventional approaches, and less supportive environments are the main obstacles in mastering

speaking abilities (Habib et al., 2025; Islamiyati & Ammar, 2023; Lubis et al., 2022; Taufiq et al., 2022). On that basis, finding solutions such as innovative, interactive learning methods and media that can arouse students' interest and confidence is crucial.

Peer tutoring is a method where students with superior skills assist their peers in understanding the subject at hand (Bengi et al., 2022). This approach refers to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development concept, where learning is optimized when guided by individuals with a better understanding (Toulia et al., 2023). In its implementation, peer tutors provide gradual guidance that helps students learn independently, a process known as scaffolding (Al Yahyaei et al., 2024). Moreover, this approach corroborates the theory of constructivism, where students actively construct knowledge through social interaction and direct learning experiences (Li et al., 2025). According to several studies, peer tutoring enhances students' social and emotional competencies, such as empathy, communication, teamwork, and academic performance (Ain et al., 2023). Thus, this method contributes comprehensively to students' cognitive and affective development, making it a practical approach in collaborative learning (Topping, 2020).

However, the effectiveness of peer tutoring will be more innovative when combined with supporting learning media. Flashcards are learning tools in the form of cards containing vocabulary, images, or sentences specifically designed to help students repeat and strengthen memories effectively (Nurjannah et al., 2023). This media supports visual and verbal information processing, making it easier for students to remember vocabulary and language structures important for developing speaking abilities (Luthfillah & Fauzia, 2023). With flashcards, students receive continuous stimulation through planned practice, allowing them to practice speaking more fluently and accurately (Munir et al., 2023). In addition, flashcards also play a role in reducing speaking anxiety as they provide a visual guide that helps increase confidence during practice sessions (Ramdhani, 2022). Therefore, flashcards are not only a tool to expand vocabulary, but also an effective medium to improve fluency and accuracy, so they are instrumental in honing speaking abilities.

Based on the results of initial observations, the implementation of learning speaking abilities at Madrasah Aliyah Khairul Ummah, teachers use the Problem-Based Learning method with the help of Quizzizz media. Students are expected to have good and correct speaking abilities based on the teaching methods and media used. Unfortunately, the results obtained have not been as expected. In fact, students' speaking abilities are still weak.

Numerous prior studies have demonstrated the advantages of peer tutoring and flashcard resources in developing speaking abilities. Research by Setiyawan et al. shows that applying peer teaching in a college environment can increase active student participation, especially in learning speaking abilities, because of the cooperation between students with diverse abilities (Setiawan

et al., 2023). Similarly, a study conducted by Anam found that speaking and learning using peer tutors was more effective than direct learning by teachers, even though the context was English and did not use visual support media (Anam, 2020). Conversely, studies by Syifa and Wicaksono indicate that utilizing flashcards in Arabic vocabulary instruction can enhance student motivation and facilitate easier retention of words (Wicaksono et al., 2024; Syifa et al., 2022). However, both approaches are still studied separately.

Based on the gap, this study presents an innovative approach by combining the peer tutoring method and flashcard media to create an interactive learning process and support improving students' speaking abilities. Considering the results of earlier research, this study aims to focus on two problem formulations, 1) How is the flashcard-based peer tutoring method implemented in learning speaking abilities? and 2) is a flashcard-based peer tutoring method effective in improving students' speaking abilities?

2. Method

This study utilizes a quasi-experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests for control and experimental groups within a quantitative framework. As Creswell (2018) defined, the quantitative approach prioritizes numerical data collection and statistical analysis to examine theoretical propositions through variable measurement and hypothesis testing objectively (Creswell et al., 2018). The selection of this methodology enables a precise assessment of how integrating peer teaching with flashcard media enhances Arabic speaking proficiency. The quasi-experimental structure was adopted due to practical constraints in participant randomization, utilizing pre-existing class cohorts as experimental (treatment) and control groups instead (Shadish et al., 2002).

Population is defined as all subjects or objects with specific characteristics that are the focus of the researcher's attention. According to Arikunto (2010), the population is all research subjects (Arikunto, 2010). The study's population comprises 140 Class XI students of MA Khairul Ummah Batu Gajah. The sample, defined as a representative subset of the population, serves as a primary data source (Amin et al., 2023) and was selected through purposive sampling. The selection criteria included: (1) intact class sections to maintain natural classroom settings, and (2) comparable academic levels. Based on these criteria, two classes were chosen: Class XI IPA II (n = 28) as the experimental group and Class XI IPA III (n = 26) as the control group.

Data were collected using speaking assessments administered as pre-tests and post-tests. The test consists of five oral questions based on speaking abilities indicators in the learning plan that has been designed. Following Panjaitan's definition, these tests constitute structured instruments designed to measure specific variables such as skills or competencies (Panjaitan, 2017). A parametric statistical approach guided the analysis, beginning with Shapiro-Wilk normality

testing to verify distributional assumptions appropriate for moderate sample sizes (Razali & Yap Bee Wah, 2011). Subsequently, Levene's test evaluated variance homogeneity across groups (Field, 2018). Upon confirming both assumptions (p > .05), independent samples t-tests determined significant inter-group mean differences (Lodico et al., 2006).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Implementation of the Flashcard-Based Peer Tutoring Method in Learning Speaking Abilities

The implementation of the peer tutoring method usually goes through three main stages: planning, observation, and evaluation (Wali et al., 2020). At the planning stage, the teacher selects the right peer tutoring and provides technical briefings for effective implementation (Widiyantara, 2022). At this stage, teachers choose students who are considered competent and offer a deep understanding of their duties and responsibilities as tutors, so they are ready to help their friends optimally (Anggraini & Puji Rahayu, 2016). At the observation stage, the learning process occurs in small groups with tutors who provide guidance, creating a supportive learning atmosphere and allowing individual feedback (Fat Maulana et al., 2024a; Trang, 2023). Consequently, this assessment is a critical mechanism for monitoring tutor-student progress and iteratively enhancing pedagogical effectiveness (Andini & Deswalantri, 2024). Furthermore, this small group formation also encourages active student involvement and supports more interactive learning (Isrokatun et al., 2023; Safitri, 2022). Employing a structured framework, this pedagogical approach facilitates measurable gains in oral proficiency while concurrently fostering confidence-building and collaborative competencies, outcomes corroborated by quantifiable score improvements and heightened engagement metrics post-implementation (Fat Maulana et al., 2024b; Jupri & Karyawan, 2022).

The peer tutoring method offers several advantages in the learning process. Among them are increasing active student participation and improving learning outcomes (Wali et al., 2020). Students who act as tutors also gain benefits such as growing self-confidence and social skills through direct peer interaction (Puspitasari et al., 2019). In addition, by re-explaining the material to friends, tutors can strengthen their understanding of the lesson content (Bengi et al., 2022). However, this method is not free from shortcomings, such as the possibility of misinformation due to the tutor's lack of mastery of the material, the potential for student dependence on the tutor, and the need for teacher skills in managing groups so that all participants can actively participate (Arrahim & Ratnasari, 2023). Empirical evidence confirms that strategically managed implementation sustains this method's effectiveness as a learning enhancement tool.

The research-implemented flashcard-assisted peer tutoring methodology followed a tripartite structure: preparatory design, execution, and appraisal. During the preparatory phase,

the researcher, a) initiated sessions with customary greetings and devotional recitations; b) Articulated learning objectives while reviewing prior content; c) administered pre-test assessments; d) detailed the procedural framework for peer tutoring. Students were then divided into groups based on their test results and given picture cards as the main medium. In the execution stage, the researcher gave each group time to compose sentences based on the pictures on the cards given. After that, the researcher formed new groups so that students could exchange discussion results and enrich their understanding through cross-group interactions. Students were then asked to present the results of their discussions completely and orally in Arabic, where the researcher observed the interaction process, student involvement, and their ability to speak. The appraisal phase was conducted during session closure, wherein the researcher, a) facilitated a scaffolded review of cumulative material; b) implemented structured formative assessment of speaking proficiency.

The indicators of speaking abilities according to Thu'aimah (1985) are, if you can pronounce Arabic sounds correctly, express ideas using appropriate grammatical structures, speak fluently and continuously in a reasonable time span, which reflects self-confidence and the ability to interact with others, use gestures, movements, and non-verbal expressions appropriately to convey intent or ideas, can lead discussions on a topic, determine the roles of the members involved, and draw conclusions from the opinions expressed, etc (Thu'aimah, 1985). So in this study, the indicators of speaking abilities assessed include correct pronunciation of Arabic letters, understanding of topics when speaking, proper use of Arabic, and the ability to construct meaningful sentences. The activity of learning speaking abilities through a flashcard-based peer tutoring method can be seen in Figure 1. Meanwhile, the flashcards used in learning can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Activity of learning speaking abilities through a flashcard-based peer tutoring method

Figure 2. Flashcards used in learning speaking abilities MA Khairul Ummah

3.2. Effectiveness of the Flashcard-Based Peer Tutoring Method in Improving Students' Speaking Abilities

This study investigated the efficacy of flashcard-mediated peer tutoring for enhancing Arabic oral proficiency among Grade XI students at Madrasah Aliyah Khairul Ummah, addressing the primary research question. The methodology employed pre-intervention and post-intervention speaking assessments, with subsequent data subjected to Shapiro-Wilk normality testing, Levene's homogeneity analysis, and independent samples t-tests for comparative evaluation.

Table 1. Average Score and Pre-test and Post-test Differences

Group	Pre-test Average	Post-test Average	Difference
Experiment	64.82	82.14	17.32
Control	59.81	69.23	9.42

Table 1 displays the average scores on the pre-test and post-test for two groups: the experimental and the control groups. The experimental group began with an average pre-test score of 63.82, which rose to 82.14 in the post-test, reflecting an increase of 18.32 points. On the other hand, the control group experienced an increase from 59.81 to 69.23, with a difference of only 9.42 points. The differential improvement in learning outcomes demonstrates greater efficacy of the experimental intervention in enhancing Arabic speaking abilities. Statistically marked gains within the treatment cohort confirm that peer-assisted learning augmented by flashcards significantly advances students' linguistic competencies. These findings align with Ariesinta and Widyantoro's (2024) action research, where peer tutoring implementation substantially improved L2 speaking abilities. Notably, in fluency, lexical command, and comprehension, while simultaneously fostering self-efficacy and collaborative capacities among learners (Ariesinta & Widyantoro, 2024).

Normality and homogeneity assessments constitute essential preliminary analyses to validate parametric test assumptions. Normality testing determines data distribution conformity to Gaussian patterns, wherein significance values (p) exceeding 0.05 indicate normal distribution,

while p ≤ 0.05 suggests deviation. The methodology selection depends on sample characteristics: Kolmogorov-Smirnov proves robust for larger datasets, whereas Shapiro-Wilk offers superior sensitivity for smaller samples in detecting distributional anomalies (Ghozali, 2018; Sugiyono, 2013). Concurrently, homogeneity evaluation examines variance equivalence across groups via Levene's or Bartlett's tests. Significance levels above 0.05 confirm homogeneity, while values below this threshold necessitate analytical adjustments through non-parametric techniques that bypass variance homogeneity requirements (Field, 2018; Sugiyono, 2013). Data are presented in Tables 2 and 3 as follows,

Table 2. Normality test between experimental and control groups for pre-test and post-test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test Experimental Class	.164	26	.069	.928	26	.070
Post-test Experimental Class	.174	26	.042	.937	26	.111
Pre-test Control Class	.154	26	.114	.953	26	.274
Post-test Control Class	.188	26	.019	.930	26	.080

Table 3. Homogeneity test between the experimental and control groups of the pre-test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pre-test	Based on Mean	.881	1	52	.352
	Based on Median	.908	1	52	.345
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.908	1	51.854	.345
	Based on trimmed mean	.940	1	52	.337

Table 2 and 3 presents the experimental group's pre-intervention p-value was 0.070, the post-intervention p-value was 0.111, the control group's pre-intervention p-value was 0.274, and the post-intervention p-value was 0.080. Shapiro-Wilk tests demonstrated normality. All values exceeding α=0.05 confirmed distributional normality, satisfying parametric analysis requirements. Subsequently, Levene's test for variance homogeneity demonstrated non-significant results across central tendency measures: mean-based (p=0.352), median-based (p=0.345), and trimmed mean-based (p=0.337) approaches. These collective findings (p>0.05) establish homogeneous inter-group variances, confirming baseline equivalence between experimental and control cohorts.

The final form of data analysis is the Independent Sample t-test. This parametric statistical method determines if the mean values of two different, unrelated groups differ statistically significantly. Groups are considered independent when subjects in one group share no inherent connection or relationship with those in the other group. Researchers frequently employ this test in experimental settings; for instance, it is well-suited to evaluate differences in academic performance between student cohorts exposed to varying instructional approaches (Nuryadi et al., 2017).

Table 4. Descriptive statistics analysis of pre-test and post-test of experimental and control groups

Statistics Data					
	N	**Range**	**Minim**	**Max**	**Mean**
Pre-test Experiment	28	35	40	75	64.82
Post-test Experiment	28	25	70	95	82.14
Pre-test Control	26	25	45	70	69.23
Post-test Control	26	25	55	80	59.81

Table 5. Independent Sample t-test in the experimental and control groups of the pre-test and post-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	**Sig.**	**T**	**df**	**Sig.(2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**Lower**	**Upper**
Speaking Abilities	Equal variances assumed	.143	.707	7.008	52	.000	7.89835	1.12703	5.63680	10.15990
	Equal variances not assumed			6.956	48.443	.000	7.89835	1.13544	5.61593	10.18077

Table 4 and 5 presents the analysis testing the main research hypothesis: a comparison of post-intervention outcomes between the experimental and control groups for statistical significance. Since the groups were unrelated and were only evaluated once following treatment, the independent samples t-test was suitable. The test findings show a mean difference of 7.89835, degrees of freedom (df) of 52, a t-count of 7.008, and a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000. We accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) and reject the null hypothesis (H_0) since the significance value is less than 0.05. This implies that the experimental and control groups' post-test results differ significantly. Furthermore, the 95% Confidence Interval for the Difference ranges from 5.63680 to 10.15990, which does not include zero. This reinforces the conclusion that the observed differences are unlikely due to random chance and are attributable to the treatment administered to the experimental group.

This study reveals that peer tutoring techniques supplemented with flashcard media effectively enhances students' speaking abilities. The results from the post-test indicated a significant improvement in the experimental group compared to the control group. Furthermore, the data satisfied the criteria for normality and homogeneity, providing strong evidence that the intervention positively impacted the students' performance. Alongside academic advancements, this approach also fosters soft skills, including self-confidence and teamwork. Therefore, this method should be regarded as a viable option in language education that focuses on enhancing overall communication skills.

While the statistical results strongly indicate that the flashcard-based peer tutoring method significantly impacted students' speaking abilities, effectiveness in language learning encompasses more than just test scores. Improvements in oral communication also rely on affective factors such as confidence, motivation, and willingness to speak, which may not be fully captured by quantitative measures alone. Although this study primarily used a quantitative approach, classroom observations during the intervention noted increased peer collaboration, spontaneous speaking attempts, and greater student engagement in the experimental group. These behavioral shifts suggest that the flashcard method, in conjunction with peer tutoring, improved measurable speaking outcomes and supported the development of essential communicative behaviors. Future research employing qualitative or mixed-method designs would further enrich these findings. However, the current data, supported by both statistical significance and pedagogical rationale, strongly validate the method's efficacy in enhancing speaking abilities.

This study shows that combining the peer tutoring method with flashcards significantly improves students' Arabic speaking abilities in terms of fluency, accuracy, and confidence, in line with the findings of Ariesinta and Widyantoro (2024) on the effectiveness of peer tutoring in improving speaking proficiency and the results of research by Syifa et al. (2022) and Wicaksono et al. (2024) on the role of flashcards in strengthening vocabulary retention and speaking motivation. The novelty of this study lies in integrating both strategies into a single intervention, which differs from previous studies (Anam, 2020; Syifa et al., 2022) that examined them separately, thereby creating an interactive multimodal learning environment. The results showed that the experimental group experienced an increase of 17.32 points compared to 9.42 points in the control group, indicating a more substantial effect than the use of each method independently. The focus on Arabic in this study also expands the scope of previous findings. It contributes new insights to the limited research on the combined application of peer tutoring and flashcards in Arabic language learning.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that combining visual aids like flashcards with peer tutoring techniques is a successful way to help students learn Arabic by enhancing their speaking abilities. This approach does not merely repeat conventional methods but offers innovative learning that emphasizes student activity, social interaction, and strengthening self-confidence in expressing ideas orally. The significantly improved post-test results in the experimental group confirm that a well-designed and flexible peer tutoring model, supported by visual media, can improve students' pronunciation, sentence structure, and confidence in speaking spontaneously. Beyond academic outcomes, this approach also positively impacts the development of non-academic skills such as

collaboration and leadership, making it a comprehensive learning and character development method.

Given these results, teachers and curriculum developers are advised to implement peer-tutoring-based learning models using media such as flashcards or other interactive tools to address students' limitations in speaking abilities in foreign language classrooms. To enrich these findings, further research could focus on applying this method in different age groups, ability levels, or subject areas. Moreover, it is crucial to analyze how it affects other language skills like listening and reading, along with the ability for long-term retention. Such an examination will offer a deeper insight into the effectiveness of visual-interactive, collaboration-oriented approaches in learning a second language.

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