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Arabic Language Instruction Through YouTube-Based Vlogs To Enhance The Arabic Speaking Proficiency Of Students At Darul Falah Amtsilati

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the effectiveness of using YouTube-based vlogs to enhance students' speaking skills (mahārah kalām) at Darul Falah Amtsilati Islamic Boarding School. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research involved students from the Darussalam dormitory as its subjects. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and performance assessments of the vlogs. The findings reveal that using vlog media positively impacted the development of students' speaking skills, particularly in fluency, sentence structure accuracy, self-confidence, and the ability to express ideas creatively and communicatively. Although restrictions on the use of mobile devices within the boarding school posed a challenge, assigning vlog-making projects during school holidays proved to be an innovative solution that remained within institutional regulations. Furthermore, the students responded positively to this method, increasing learning motivation and developing 21st-century skills. This study recommends integrating digital media, such as vlogs, into Arabic language instruction as an educational innovation aligned with contemporary needs.

Keywords: Vlog; Youtube; Maharah Kalam; Arabic Language Learning; Islamic Boarding School

INTRODUCTION

In Arabic language learning, particularly in speaking skills (*mahārah kalām*), there are achievement standards that serve as the primary benchmarks for assessing the success of the learning process (Nurjannah, 2024). These standards require students to be able to express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings orally in correct Arabic, both in terms of grammatical structure and fluency, and in accordance with linguistic conventions. Mastery of *mahārah kalām* is not only essential for smooth personal communication, but also for deepening understanding of classical texts (*turāth*), enriching knowledge of Islamic sciences, and expanding the ability to engage in social, academic, and professional interactions at a global level(Ummah, 2019). Therefore, the instruction of

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mahārah kalām must be designed systematically and oriented toward real-life practice that gradually and sustainably nurtures students' communicative competence.

Success in achieving *mahārah kalām* encompasses several key aspects. First, fluency in speaking (*thalāqah al-kalām*), which refers to students' ability to speak smoothly without frequent pauses, stammering, or unnecessary repetition, enabling their speech to be easily understood by listeners. Second, accuracy in using language structures (*dhabt al-qawāʿid*), meaning the correct application of *nahw* (syntax) and *ṣarf* (morphology) rules in every utterance, reflecting a solid grasp of the complex grammatical system of Arabic. Third, coherence in sentence construction (*ṣiyāghah al-jumal*), which indicates the ability to formulate sentences that are logical, cohesive, and coherent, thus allowing ideas to be communicated in an organized manner. Fourth, students' confidence and active participation in oral activities such as presentations, conversations, debates, and group discussions, which demonstrates not only theoretical understanding but also the practical application of Arabic in real communicative contexts. These four indicators are closely interconnected and serve as essential benchmarks in assessing the success of *mahārah kalām* instruction(Nalole, 2018).

In an interview conducted by the researcher with one of the teachers at the Darussalam dormitory, it was revealed that the achievement of Arabic speaking proficiency standards among the students of Darul Falah Amtsilati still faces significant challenges. Many students struggle to speak fluently, due to limited vocabulary, inability to construct grammatically correct sentences, and a lack of confidence to speak in front of others. These issues are further exacerbated by the dominance of traditional teaching methods, which focus heavily on text memorization, word-for-word translation, and passive repetition patterns. As a result, students are given little opportunity to engage in active and creative language expression. The text-oriented learning activities have left students undertrained in applying Arabic in real-life contexts.

One of the main reasons for the students' failure to meet the standard of speaking proficiency (*mahārah kalām*) is the low intensity of active speaking practice during the learning process(Fikriyah, 2022). Arabic language instruction in many Islamic boarding schools, including Darul Falah Amtsilati, still tends to focus on theoretical aspects—such as vocabulary acquisition, grammar (*naḥw*, *ṣarf*), and text memorization—which, while important, do not directly engage students in speaking practice. In this context, time that could be devoted to speaking exercises is often redirected toward theoretical explanations and rote memorization, leaving limited opportunities for students to engage in active oral practice. Consequently, students often lack sufficient space to develop their speaking skills intensively, which ultimately hinders their mastery of *mahārah kalām*.

Psychological factors also play a significant role in this issue. Many students experience anxiety or fear of making mistakes when speaking in Arabic, which leads to a reluctance to participate in speaking activities in the classroom. The fear of being wrong or the embarrassment of being corrected by teachers or peers often prevents students from speaking (Fikriyah, 2022). They tend to feel more comfortable listening or reading,

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resulting in a passive rather than active language acquisition. This sense of awkwardness can become more severe if there is no supportive approach that encourages students to speak without fear of criticism or correction.

The impact of these conditions is the students' low ability to use Arabic in a spontaneous and natural manner. Students often only acquire Arabic passively—such as reading texts or listening to conversations—but lack sufficient training in speaking or engaging in verbal communication (Ummah, 2019). While they may have a good understanding of Arabic texts, they struggle when asked to speak or respond in real-time conversations(Desi, 2022). This results in an inability to translate their linguistic knowledge into active communication, which is essential for everyday interactions. Consequently, the primary goal of Arabic language education—namely, making Arabic an effective and productive means of communication—cannot be fully achieved. Students are frequently deprived of opportunities to develop the speaking skills necessary for effective interaction in both social and academic contexts.

In addressing these challenges, the use of vlog media as a means to enhance *mahārah kalām* at Darul Falah Amtsilati Islamic Boarding School—where there is a strict policy prohibiting students from bringing mobile phones during their studies—requires innovative solutions that remain in compliance with the norms and regulations of the boarding school. One strategic solution that can be implemented is assigning students the task of creating vlogs during the school holidays. The holiday period is an important time that can be optimized for extending the students' learning process in a non-formal setting (Lubis et al., 2024). During this period, students have greater access to technology as they are outside the boarding school environment, allowing them to use devices such as mobile phones, digital cameras, or laptops to create vlog videos. This assignment not only serves to occupy the holiday time but also acts as a form of lifelong learning approach, where the process of mastering the Arabic language continues outside the classroom.

For this program to be effective, the teachers have developed clear and systematic technical guidelines and learning protocols. For example, teachers can determine themes for the vlogs that are related to everyday life, religious activities, personal stories, or topics from the lessons that have been taught, ensuring that the speaking exercises remain contextual and focused. Each vlog can be directed to have a specific duration, for instance, between 3 to 5 minutes, and should be conducted using pure Arabic without mixing in other languages. Additionally, teachers can equip students with a self-assessment sheet, helping them to reflect on their speaking performance before submitting the assignment.

The evaluation aspect consists of several criteria:

1. Fluency in speaking (*ṭalāqah al-kalām*): How fluently the student expresses ideas without excessive hesitation or pauses.
2. Accuracy in language structure (*ḍabṭ al-qawāʿid*): The correct application of Arabic grammar rules.
3. Coherence and cohesion of sentences (*siyāghah al-jumal*): Whether the student is able to construct sentences that are logical and communicative.

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4. Pronunciation and intonation (*naġham al-lughah*): Clarity in pronouncing letters and using natural intonation.
5. Creativity and originality: The student's ability to develop ideas in an engaging and original way in the vlog.

This vlog assignment not only serves as a tool for measuring learning outcomes but also functions as a project-based learning (PBL) approach that fosters a sense of responsibility, creativity, independent learning, as well as critical and reflective thinking skills among students (Susanti, 2019). Through this project, students not only refine their linguistic abilities but also develop important soft skills such as planning, presentation, time management, and problem-solving.

From a psychological perspective, the vlog assignment during the holiday period also provides students with the opportunity to speak without the immediate pressure from teachers or peers(Fikriyah, 2022). This condition indirectly helps reduce speaking anxiety, boosts self-confidence, and provides a more personal and meaningful learning experience. By regularly practicing speaking through vlogs, students can develop the habit of speaking Arabic, which ultimately accelerates their proficiency in oral communication.

In the context of the pesantren environment, this strategy also serves as an innovative learning approach that respects the rules of the boarding school while addressing the challenges of the current digital era. Students are accustomed to using technology for productive and educational purposes, rather than merely for entertainment. This also instills values of responsibility and ethics in the healthy use of digital media among the students. The submission of vlog results can be done before the students return to the boarding school. Teachers can instruct students to upload their work to their personal YouTube channels and send the video links to the teachers via WhatsApp for evaluation and assessment. Through this approach, the limitations of digital facilities within the boarding school environment do not hinder the innovation of Arabic language learning. On the contrary, these limitations encourage the emergence of creative solutions that support the main goal of education: to shape students who are able to communicate fluently, accurately, confidently, and creatively in Arabic, in accordance with the established standards of *mahārah kalām*(Aziza & Muliansyah, 2020).

This research was conducted at Darul Falah Amtsilati Islamic Boarding School, specifically in the Darussalam Dormitory, in response to the implementation of YouTube-based vlog media in Arabic language learning as part of the students' speaking practice. The research problem is to examine how the implementation and impact of the vlog media have affected the students' speaking ability and self-confidence in speaking Arabic. The aim of this study is to provide a deeper description of the process of using vlogs as a learning medium and to evaluate how effectively this medium has helped students become more active and confident. This study is expected to provide a clear picture of the practice of digital-based learning in the pesantren environment and inspire other educators to develop relevant and contextual teaching methods.

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Several previous studies have shown the effectiveness of vlog media in enhancing foreign language speaking skills. A study conducted by (Desi, 2022) found that using vlogs as a learning medium significantly improved students' confidence and speaking abilities in English language learning. Through the vlog creation activity, students felt freer to express themselves without pressure, making them more active and courageous in speaking. Meanwhile, a study by (Muthmainnah & Annas, 2020) indicated that the use of vlogs not only enhanced speaking fluency but also improved the accuracy of sentence structure usage in language practice. In their study, vlogs encouraged students to pay more attention to grammar and speaking fluency as they practiced repeatedly before recording and publishing their final results.

In the context of Arabic language learning, a study conducted by (Azizah, 2022) reinforces these findings by showing that video-based digital media, including vlogs, can enhance students' speaking abilities in the *Mahārah Kalam* course. Azizah found that students using vlogs showed a significant improvement in speaking fluency, confidence in communication, and accuracy in using Arabic language structure. The vlog creation process allows students to hone their speaking skills more independently and reflectively, as they can revise their speech before recording the final version, which ultimately improves the quality of the language they use.

The findings of these studies strengthen the urgency and relevance of using vlog media as an alternative innovative teaching method to enhance the *maharah kalām* of students. The application of vlog media is expected to address the challenges of Arabic language learning in the pesantren environment, such as the lack of active speaking practice, low self-confidence in speaking, and the need for more creative and contextual learning approaches. Therefore, this research is crucial to examine in greater depth the effectiveness of vlog media in the context of pesantren education, while also contributing to the development of more applicable, innovative, and adaptive Arabic language teaching methods in response to the evolving times.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method aimed at examining a phenomenon in depth and presenting it through verbal descriptions and the use of language(Moleong, 2018). It provides a detailed depiction of the process of using YouTube-based vlogs as a medium in Arabic language learning and their impact on improving students' speaking skills (maharah kalam). This approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon through the collection of qualitative data in the form of words, behaviors, and documentation. The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Darul Falah Amtsilati, Jepara, Central Java, focusing on the students' activities in creating vlogs during the boarding school's holiday period.

The subjects of this study are the students of the Darussalam Dormitory at Darul Falah Amtsilati Islamic Boarding School, who participate in Arabic language learning, specifically in the *Mahārah Kalam* skills. Data collection was carried out through several

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techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to observe the vlog assignment and the use of Arabic by the students in the videos they created. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with several students to explore their experiences and the challenges they encountered during the vlog creation process. Documentation in the form of video files of the students' vlogs uploaded to YouTube served as the primary source for analyzing the development of their speaking abilities. Additionally, performance tests were applied through direct assessments of the students' vlog videos based on several criteria, such as speaking fluency, accuracy in using language structure, clarity of pronunciation, and creativity in presenting the material.

Data analysis in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is carried out by sorting and filtering important data relevant to the research focus. Data presentation is done in the form of descriptive narratives to show patterns that emerge from the results of observation, interviews, and documentation. The final stage is drawing conclusions based on the patterns found, so that the effectiveness of using vlog media in improving the *maharah kalām* of students can be understood. In this study, the primary instrument is the researcher themselves as the human instrument, with the help of observation guidelines, interview guidelines, vlog performance assessment rubrics, and video documentation notes. To ensure data validity, the researcher applies source and method triangulation techniques to ensure that the findings obtained can be academically accountable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data obtained through observations, interviews, and documentation, the researcher examines several important aspects related to the use of YouTube-based vlog media in teaching *maharah kalām* at Darul Falah Amtsilati Islamic Boarding School in the Darussalam Dormitory. The focus of this study includes the reasons for using vlogs in learning Arabic speaking skills, the process of creating vlogs by students as a means to enhance their *maharah kalām*, and the students' perceptions of the effectiveness of vlog media in supporting their speaking skills. This discussion aims to provide a comprehensive picture of how digital media can be integrated into Arabic language learning to achieve the expected speaking proficiency standards.

The Reasons for Using YouTube-Based Vlogs in Learning Maharah Kalam

The use of YouTube-based vlogs in learning *maharah kalam* greatly supports the development of Arabic speaking skills in an effective and practical way. Vlogs provide an opportunity for students to practice speaking independently and continuously, honing their speaking abilities outside the classroom. The process of creating vlogs not only focuses on pronunciation or sentence structure but also on authentic self-expression and more natural language use. Students can learn how to convey ideas or information clearly and engagingly, whether for a wider audience or in everyday conversation contexts. This

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also allows them to familiarize themselves with the dynamics of verbal communication, such as intonation, word emphasis, and non-verbal expressions, which are crucial in verbal communication.

As an educator, assigning YouTube-based vlog tasks to students, especially during the holiday period, provides an opportunity to enrich *maharah kalam* learning even when there are no formal sessions at the Islamic boarding school. This becomes an effective solution to overcome the limitations of speaking practice time at the boarding school and the rule prohibiting the use of mobile phones in the pesantren environment. Vlog assignments allow students to actively practice outside of formal learning hours and help them stay connected to the Arabic language learning process. Furthermore, this task can develop students' creativity in choosing topics and ways to present material, which in turn makes them more engaged in language learning. The YouTube-based vlog task encourages students not only to learn Arabic but also to become more creative in delivering information and communicating with others.

The use of vlogs as a learning medium also provides an opportunity for students to develop other skills beyond speaking, such as technical skills in recording, editing videos, and understanding aspects of digital media. This opens up opportunities for students to develop 21st-century skills that are crucial in an increasingly digital world. They not only become more proficient in speaking Arabic but also become more familiar with technology that increasingly influences the way we learn and communicate. Therefore, the use of vlogs as a medium for learning *maharah kalam* not only impacts the improvement of Arabic speaking skills but also broadens the scope of students' learning in a holistic manner.

The Process of Creating YouTube-Based Vlogs in Enhancing *Maharah Kalam* (Arabic Speaking Skills)

The process of creating YouTube-based vlogs in *maharah kalam* (Arabic speaking skills) learning involves several stages designed to optimize students' speaking abilities in Arabic. Each stage of the vlog creation provides opportunities for students to practice, reflect on their skills, and improve linguistic aspects that still need enhancement. This process not only hones their speaking skills but also improves their technical abilities in creating high-quality videos, which, in turn, boosts their confidence in communicating in Arabic.

In the first stage of creating YouTube-based vlogs, the teacher assigns topics focused on simple tutorials, such as how to make tea, coffee, or boil noodles. This choice of topics is strategic because it is based on activities that are close to the daily life of the students. By selecting familiar and easy-to-understand topics, students will feel more comfortable and confident in speaking Arabic. Additionally, topics related to cooking activities allow students to speak in a relevant and practical context, which can increase their motivation to learn Arabic. This is important considering that language learning in pesantren often faces challenges in engaging students, so choosing topics that align with

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their interests and habits can strengthen the learning process of *maharah kalam* (Arabic speaking skills).

The cooking topic offers advantages in terms of simplicity, as students are already familiar with these activities. This approach ensures they don't feel burdened by overly technical or difficult material. In the context of *maharah kalam* (Arabic speaking skills), discussing everyday activities allows students to practice Arabic in a more casual and direct situation. It also helps reduce the awkwardness that language learners often feel when asked to speak about topics far removed from their daily lives. Additionally, talking about practical topics like making tea or noodles provides an opportunity for students to focus on using communicative language, without the worry of awkwardness in constructing overly complex sentences.

At this stage, the students are asked to create a script or outline explaining the steps of making tea, coffee, or instant noodles in Arabic in detail. This process requires the students to think systematically, plan the material they will present, and choose the right words in Arabic. The selection of appropriate vocabulary and the use of correct sentence structures are crucial parts of this exercise because they directly relate to their speaking skills. Additionally, they can expand their vocabulary with terms related to cooking activities, such as ingredients (e.g., tea, sugar, water), utensils (e.g., pot, cup, spoon), and cooking techniques (e.g., boiling water, mixing ingredients). This also provides an opportunity to practice accuracy in using vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to the situational context.

The second stage is the production and recording of the video. In this phase, students are instructed to record their explanations according to the script they have prepared, using Arabic as the primary medium of communication. This process not only aims to train their oral speaking skills but also hones their ability to deliver information in an expressive, coherent, and understandable manner for the audience.

In this recording process, students are encouraged to pay attention to several important aspects, such as intonation, articulation, facial expressions, and appropriate body language. This aims to ensure that the communication within the vlog is both communicative and engaging for the audience. Additionally, they are guided to focus on correct pronunciation of Arabic words (ṣawt al-ḥarf), allowing their phonetic skills to develop as well. Therefore, the vlog production process becomes not just a speaking practice, but also a way to foster professionalism in presenting information publicly. Media tools such as mobile phone cameras and simple video editing applications (e.g., CapCut or Kinemaster) are introduced as supporting technical tools. Although students are not allowed to bring gadgets while at the boarding school, they have the opportunity and facilities to carry out this task during the holiday at home. In this context, their families are indirectly involved as technical support, making this activity a part of collaborative learning between the students and their surrounding environment.

After the students successfully complete the recording and editing of their vlogs, the third stage is the submission of their work to the teacher for review and publication

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on the YouTube platform. The submission is done by sending a link to the video uploaded on each student's YouTube account. In some cases, the video may be sent first to the teacher for review before it is published publicly.

Publishing the vlog on YouTube is an essential part of this learning strategy because it adds an authentic dimension to the use of Arabic. Through this publication, students are encouraged to prepare and present their best work more seriously, as their videos are accessible to a wider audience. This factor indirectly boosts the students' intrinsic motivation to speak more fluently, in a structured manner, and communicatively, while also helping them build self-confidence in using Arabic in public spaces.

After the vlog is published, the teacher evaluates each video created by the students. This evaluation covers several important aspects: fluency in speaking (thalāqah al-kalām), accuracy in using Arabic grammar rules (dhabt al-qawā'id), coherence in constructing sentences (siyāghah al-jumal), logical flow of the material presented, and the expressiveness of the students while speaking. The assessment is conducted objectively using a rubric that has been prepared, ensuring that cognitive (language mastery), affective (bravery and self-confidence), and psychomotor (speaking skills) aspects are all effectively measured.

In addition, the teacher provides constructive feedback in the form of comments and suggestions to each student. This feedback helps the students identify their strengths and weaknesses in using spoken Arabic and guides them to make improvements in future tasks. Furthermore, the publication of the vlogs also allows for additional interactions, such as comments and appreciation from fellow students, family members, or the wider community. These interactions can serve as additional motivation for the continuous development of the students' maharah kalam skills.

It looks like you would like to showcase some of the students' vlogs where they make tutorials for making nasi goreng (fried rice), coffee, and energen (a type of energy drink), using Arabic.

Image 1: Fried Rice Tutorial Vlog



Image 2: Milk Coffee Brewing Tutorial Vlog



Based on the explanation above, the teacher plays not only a role as an observer but also as an active facilitator who guides and directs the process of vlog creation by the students. This role is important to ensure that the vlogs produced truly support the improvement of speaking skills (maharah kalam) and encourage students to use technology positively. This aligns with Susanti's (2019) findings, which state that the role of educators is crucial in optimizing the use of vlogs as an effective learning medium.

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The perception of students regarding the use of YouTube-based vlogs in the learning of *maharah kalam*.

Based on the results from the questionnaire distributed via Google Form to 23 students, the data shows a very positive response towards the use of YouTube-based vlogs in *maharah kalam* learning.

In the first question, all respondents (100%) answered "Yes," indicating that all students felt that using vlogs helped them practice their Arabic speaking skills. For the second question, 21 students (91.3%) answered "Yes," while 2 students (8.7%) answered "No." This shows that the majority of students felt comfortable and not burdened by making vlogs, although a small minority may have experienced difficulties or lacked confidence. For the third, fourth, and fifth questions, all respondents (100%) answered "Yes," signaling that the students generally believed that making vlogs provided significant benefits, increased their motivation to learn, and helped them feel more confident in speaking Arabic.

The following is a chart showing the students' responses regarding the use of vlogs in learning *maharah kalam*.

Figure 4: Diagram of the Responses to Question 1

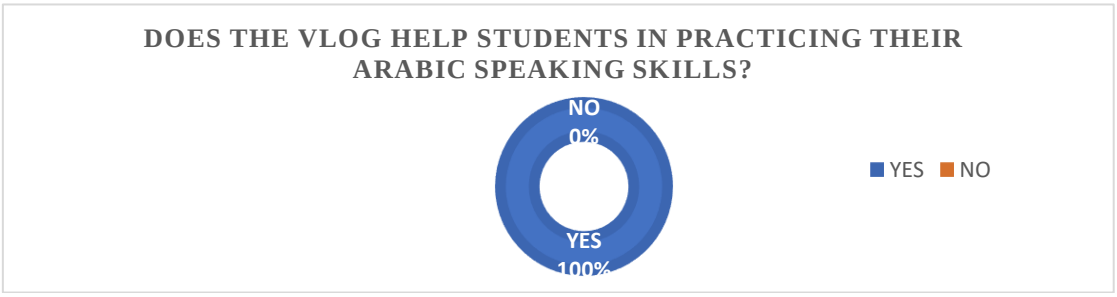


Figure 5: Diagram of the Responses to Question 2

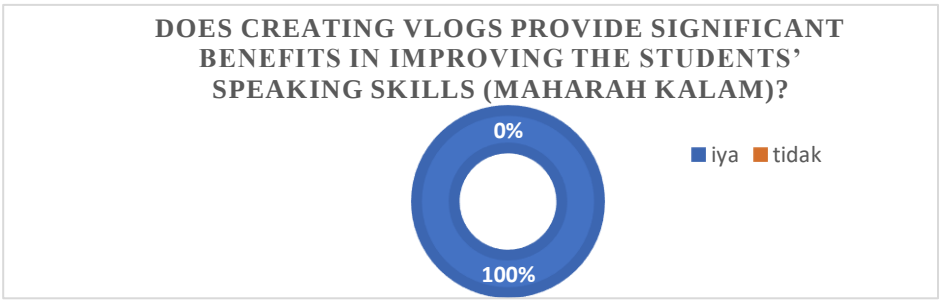
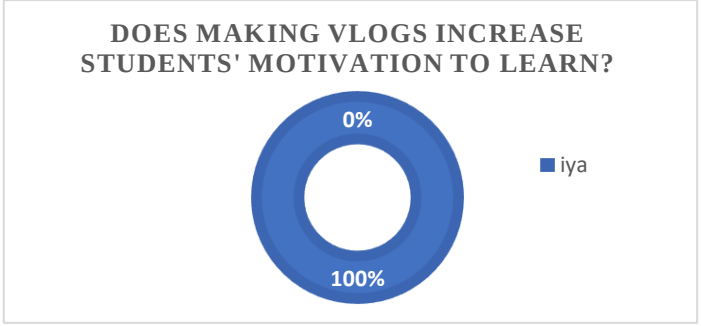


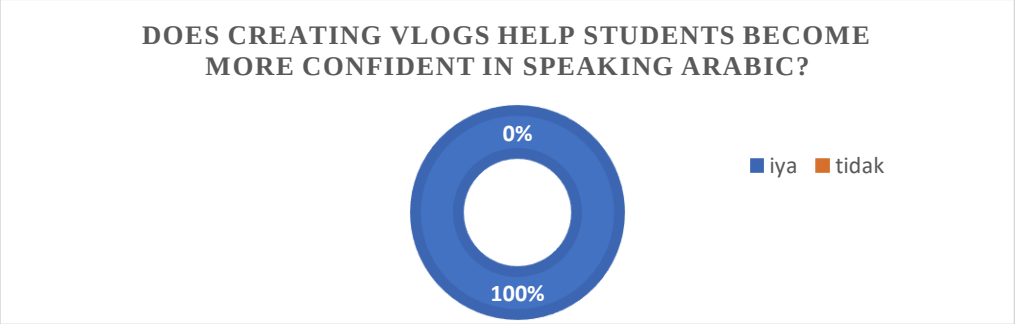
Figure 6: Diagram of Responses to Question 3



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Figure 7: Diagram of the Results for Question 4



This indicates that vlog media is not only effective as a tool for speaking practice, but also capable of facilitating students in developing communication ideas independently and creatively. Through the creation of vlogs, students are trained to think systematically, structure sentences in Arabic with correct grammar, and adjust vocabulary to the context they are explaining. This activity indirectly fosters a sense of responsibility for the quality of the language they use, as the results will be viewed and assessed by others.

In other words, vlogs serve as a learning medium that not only emphasizes cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor skills. Students are encouraged to be more active, confident, and directly involved in a learning process that is more dynamic and meaningful. Their courage to speak in front of the camera also has a positive impact on the gradual and continuous mastery of speaking skills (maharah kalam). Therefore, the use of YouTube-based vlog media can be considered an innovative, communicative solution that meets the needs of Arabic language learning in the digital era.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of YouTube media is effective in improving *maharah kalām* (speaking skills) of the students at Pondok Pesantren Darul Falah Amtsilati, Darussalam dormitory. The questionnaire results show that 100% of respondents stated that vlogging helps them practice speaking skills in Arabic, 91% of students felt comfortable and not burdened by the vlog assignment during the holiday period, while 9% felt it was burdensome. Furthermore, 100% of students stated that creating vlogs provided significant benefits in enhancing their speaking skills, 100% agreed that it increased their motivation to learn, and 100% reported feeling more confident in speaking after using this media. These findings are supported by interview and documentation data which indicate the students' enthusiasm and increased courage in speaking Arabic. Therefore, YouTube-based vlog media is highly suitable to be used as a supplementary learning tool that can holistically enhance students' Arabic speaking skills, provided it is used in a structured manner and guided by educators.

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