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ARCS-Based Instructional Design for Maharah Kalam: Enhancing Basic Communicative Competence in Arabic Language Learning

تصميم تعليم مهارة الكلام القائم على نموذجARCS لتحسين الكفاءة التواصلية في تعلّم اللغة العربية

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ABSTRACT

Speaking skill is one of the essential language skills that contributes to the development of students' communicative competence. However, students still encounter difficulties in communicating in Arabic due to limited vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, and low learning motivation. This study aimed to develop an ARCS-based (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) instructional design for speaking skills and examine its validity and effectiveness in enhancing the communicative competence of seventh-grade students at Nurul Iman Modern Junior High School. The study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model. The participants consisted of 30 seventh-grade students. Data were collected through interviews, observations, questionnaires, expert validation, and pretest–posttest assessments. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, N-Gain analysis, and the Paired Sample T-Test with IBM SPSS Statistics. The results indicated that the developed instructional design achieved mean expert validation scores of 3.64, 3.58, and 3.86, all of which were categorized as highly valid. The average response scores from the teacher and students were 3.63 and 3.48 respectively, reflecting very positive perceptions of the product. Furthermore, Uji T-test (t=-28.465, p< 0.05), the N-Gain score of 0.67 demonstrated a moderate improvement in students' communicative competence. These findings suggest that the ARCS-based speaking instructional design is both valid and effective in supporting the development of students' communicative competence. The study contributes to the integration of motivational principles and communicative competence within Arabic language instruction at the junior secondary level.

Keywords: Speaking skills, ARCS model, instructional design, communicative competence, Arabic language learning.

مستخلص البحث

تعدّ مهارة الكلام من المهارات اللغوية التي تسهم في تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية لدى الطالبات. إلا أنهن يواجهن صعوباتٍ في التواصل بسبب محدودية المفردات، وضعف الثقة بالنفس، وانخفاض الدافعية للتعلُّم. ولذلك هدف البحث إلى تطوير تصميم تعليم مهارة الكلام استنادا إلى نموذج ARCS (الاهتمام، والملاءمة، والثقة بالنفس، والرضا) لتحسين الكفاءة التواصلية لدى طالبات الصف السابع بمدرسة نور الإيمان المتوسطة. استخدمت الباحثة منهج البحث والتطوير (R&D) وفق نموذج ADDIE، وشملت عينة البحث (٣٠) طالبةً من الصف السابع. وجُمعت البيانات من خلال الملاحظة، والمقابلة، والاستبانة، والاختبار، وتحكيم الخبراء، ثم حُلِّلت باستخدام برنامج IBM SPSS Statistics. أظهرت نتائجُ البحث أنّه تمّ تطوير تصميم تعليم مهارة الكلام استنادًا إلى نموذج ARCS وفق مراحل نموذج ADDIE، بما يتناسب مع احتياجات طالبات الصف السابع وأهداف تنمية الكفاءة التواصلية. كما أظهرت نتائجُ تقويم الخبراء حصولَ التصميمِ المطوَّر على متوسطاتٍ بلغت (٣,٦٤)، و(٣,٥٨)، و(٣,٨٦)، وجميعُها تقع ضمن فئة "صالح جدًا". وبلغ متوسطُ استجاباتِ المعلِّمةِ والطالباتِ (٣,٦٣) و(٣,٤٨) على التوالي، وهما ضمن فئة "جيد جدًا". كما أظهرت نتائجُ اختبار Paired Sample T-Test وجود فرقٍ ذي دلالة إحصائية بين نتائج الاختبار القبليّ والبعديّ عند مستوى دلالة أقلّ من (٠,٠٥)، في حين بلغ متوسط الكسب المعياري (N-Gain) (٠,٦٦٧)، وهو ضمن الفئة المتوسطة، مما يدلُّ على فاعلية التصميمِ المطوَّر في تحسين

الكفاءة التواصلية لدى الطالبات. وبناء على ذلك، خلص البحث إلى أنَّ تصميمَ تعليم مهارة الكلام استنادًا إلى نموذج ARCS يتمتَّع بدرجة عالية من الصلاحية، وأثبت فاعليتَه في تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية لدى طالبات الصف السابع بمدرسة نور الإيمان المتوسطة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارة الكلام، نموذج ARCS، تصميم التعليم، الكفاية التواصلية الأساسية، تعليم اللغة العربية.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking skill (mahārah kalām) is one of the essential language skills in Arabic language learning, as it serves as a tangible indicator of students' ability to use language as a means of communication (Setiyadi et al., 2023). Through speaking activities, students are expected not only to master linguistic elements, but also to express ideas, feelings, and information appropriately within communicative contexts (Kayi, 2006). Therefore, the teaching of mahārah kalām should be directed toward the development of communicative competence, enabling students to use Arabic effectively in real-life situations.

Communicative competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately and effectively in various communicative situations. According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence consists of four major components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Grammatical competence involves the mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately according to social and cultural contexts. Discourse competence is related to the ability to organize utterances coherently and cohesively, whereas strategic competence refers to the ability to employ various communication strategies to overcome difficulties during interaction (Poolsawad et al., 2015). These four components need to be developed in an integrated manner so that students not only understand Arabic as a linguistic system but are also able to use it communicatively in their everyday lives.

Nevertheless, previous studies indicate that the development of Arabic speaking skills continues to face several challenges. From a linguistic perspective, limited vocabulary mastery is one of the major factors that restricts students' ability to express their ideas orally (Thuaimah, 1986). From a psychological perspective, shyness, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence often prevent students from speaking Arabic actively (خالوصي, ٢٠٢٤). In addition, learning approaches that remain heavily oriented toward memorization and provide limited opportunities for oral communication

practice tend to reduce students' active engagement in speaking activities (Zulaikha, 2024).

Similar problems were also identified at SMP Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman. Preliminary observations revealed that students' Arabic speaking ability was still relatively low. This was evident during oral examinations, where most students had difficulty producing simple Arabic sentences and showed low confidence when speaking (Erta Mahyudin et al., 2025). Some students tended to rely on memorized expressions without fully understanding their meanings or the contexts in which they should be used (Ding, 2007). They also struggled to construct accurate sentences due to limited vocabulary and insufficient understanding of language structures. These findings indicate that students' speaking skills have not yet developed optimally.

This condition suggests that the problems faced by students are not limited to linguistic aspects but also relate to communicative competence. Students still experience difficulty using Arabic appropriately, effectively, and contextually (Kamal, 2025). In fact, the primary goal of language learning is to equip students with the ability to use language as a means of communication, rather than merely understand linguistic rules. Thus, mahārah kalām instruction needs to be designed not only to improve linguistic ability, but also to develop students' communicative competence in a more comprehensive manner.

One factor assumed to contribute to this condition is the learning approach used in the classroom. Arabic language instruction at school still tends to be text-based and focuses on mastering dialogues and sentence structures presented in the textbook, while providing relatively limited variation in speaking activities (Sugirma et al., 2024). In fact, the Grade VII Arabic textbook based on KSKK 2020 already contains several basic competencies that support the development of speaking skills, such as KD 4.1 (pp. 3–4), KD 4.3 (p. 35), KD 4.5 (p. 57), KD 4.7 (p. 80), and KD 4.9 (pp. 98 and 126). However, the implementation of these materials has not been fully supported by learning strategies that encourage students to participate actively through dialogues, role plays, and other oral communication activities.

In addition to linguistic aspects and learning strategies, learning motivation is also a crucial factor in developing speaking skills. Motivation plays an important role in fostering students' courage, confidence, and engagement in communicative activities (Hao & Lee, 2021a). Without sufficient motivation, speaking instruction tends to become

a routine activity that lacks meaning and has little significant impact on the improvement of students' communicative competence (Hasan Syaiful Rizal & Chasanah, 2023). (Keller, 1979) emphasizes that learning success is strongly influenced by students' confidence and their experience of success during the learning process. When these two aspects are not properly developed, students may experience affective barriers that reduce their willingness to participate in oral communication.

In this context, the ARCS model developed by Keller is considered a relevant approach to addressing problems in speaking instruction. This model emphasizes four key components that influence learning motivation: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (Hao & Lee, 2021b). Through the application of these components, learning is expected to create a more engaging and meaningful experience while encouraging students' active participation. In addition to enhancing learning motivation, the ARCS model also has the potential to support the development of communicative competence, as students are given more opportunities to use language in contextual and meaningful activities (Dewi & Safnowandi, 2020).

A number of previous studies have shown that communicative approaches and the ARCS model contribute positively to language learning (Bakri, 2019) found that mahārah kalām instruction through a gradually structured communicative approach could improve students' participation and speaking confidence in a pesantren context. (Aflisia & Hazuar, 2020) demonstrated that teaching materials lacking contextual relevance may contribute to students' low communicative ability and learning motivation. Meanwhile, (Putri & Hidayat, n.d.) showed that the implementation of the ARCS model significantly improved students' motivation and active participation through the development of contextual teaching materials.

However, studies that specifically integrate the ARCS model into the instructional design of mahārah kalām to develop the communicative competence of junior high school students in a pesantren-based context remain relatively limited. Most previous studies have focused on improving learning motivation or speaking skills in general but have not explicitly linked them to communicative competence as the main objective of language learning (Alnatheer, 2013). Therefore, there remains a need to develop an instructional design that integrates the motivational principles of ARCS with the development of communicative competence in Arabic language learning.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to develop a valid and effective

ARCS-based instructional design for mahārah kalām to improve the communicative competence of seventh-grade students at SMP Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of motivation-based Arabic instructional design and practical contributions for teachers in creating speaking instruction that is more communicative, engaging, and meaningful.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach to develop and evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of an ARCS-based instructional design for mahārah kalām in enhancing students' communicative competence (Wahyuni et al., 2025). The R&D method was selected because it not only facilitates the creation of educational products but also enables systematic validation and evaluation of their effectiveness in instructional settings (Gustiani, 2019).

The development process followed the ADDIE model, which consists of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Almomen et al., 2016). The ADDIE framework was adopted as the primary development model due to its systematic yet flexible structure for instructional product development. To provide greater detail during the instructional design process, the Analysis, Design, and Development stages were further informed by the instructional design principles proposed by Dick and Carey (Dick et al., 1985a).

Table 1. Stages of Product Development

ADDIE Stage	Dick and Carey Component	Description
Analysis	Identification of instructional goals	Identifying the learning objectives of mahārah kalām and students' learning needs.
	Instructional analysis	Analyzing learning materials, competencies, and existing challenges in speaking instruction.
	Learner analysis	Identifying the characteristics, prior knowledge, and learning needs of seventh-grade students.
Design	Formulation of	Developing specific and measurable

	learning objectives	learning objectives based on communicative competence.
	Instrument development	Designing observation sheets, interview guides, questionnaires, assessment rubrics, test blueprints, pretests, and posttests.
	Instructional strategy design	Designing ARCS-based speaking instruction aligned with students' characteristics and learning materials.
Development	Product development	Developing the ARCS-based instructional design and its supporting learning materials.
	Validation and revision	Conducting expert validation and revising the product based on expert feedback.
Implementation	Product implementation	Implementing the instructional design with seventh-grade students.
	Data collection	Administering pretests and posttests, observing classroom implementation, and collecting teacher and student responses.
Evaluation	Formative and summative evaluation	Evaluating the feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness of the product and refining it based on evaluation results.

The participants of this study were 30 seventh-grade students from SMP Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman who were selected as the research sample. To evaluate the effectiveness of the developed instructional design, a one-group pretest–posttest design was employed.

Data were collected through interviews, classroom observations, questionnaires, expert validation forms, and speaking assessments administered as pretests and posttests (Khan et al., 2021). Interviews and observations were conducted to identify instructional needs and learning challenges (Long, 2005). Expert validation was used to assess the quality and appropriateness of both the instructional product and the research instruments (Richey & Klein, 2014). Teacher and student perceptions of the developed product were gathered through questionnaires, while its effectiveness was measured

through students' speaking performance before and after the intervention.

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics. (Meyers et al., 2013) Descriptive analysis was used to interpret the results of expert validation, classroom observations, and user responses. The effectiveness of the instructional design was examined through the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, the Paired Samples t-test, and N-gain analysis to determine the extent of improvement in students' communicative competence following the implementation of the ARCS-based instructional design (Afifah et al., 2022).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Analysis Phase

The analysis phase was conducted through classroom observations and interviews with the Arabic language teacher and seventh-grade students at SMP Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman. The findings revealed that students' Arabic speaking proficiency remained relatively low. Most students experienced difficulties expressing ideas in Arabic due to limited vocabulary mastery, low self-confidence, and insufficient opportunities to engage in active speaking practice.

Furthermore, classroom instruction was still largely dominated by dialogue reading and the memorization of fixed expressions, which provided limited opportunities for meaningful communication. As a result, students tended to rely on memorized utterances without fully understanding their meanings or appropriate contexts of use. These findings suggest that the challenges encountered in speaking instruction extend beyond linguistic factors and also involve motivational aspects and communicative competence.

This finding is consistent with (Thuaimah, 1986), who identified vocabulary mastery as a key factor influencing Arabic speaking ability, and with (kholusi, 2024), who emphasized that low self-confidence may hinder students' willingness to communicate. Based on these findings, there was a clear need for an instructional design that not only strengthened linguistic competence but also enhanced students' motivation and engagement in communicative activities. Therefore, the ARCS model was selected as the foundation for product development because it integrates motivational principles with student-centered learning experiences.

B. Design Phase

Based on the needs analysis, an ARCS-based instructional design for mahārah kalām was developed to enhance students' communicative competence. At this stage, learning objectives, instructional strategies, learning activities, instructional media, and assessment instruments were systematically designed. (Dick et al., 1985b)

The instructional objectives were formulated based on communicative competence principles and aligned with the learning outcomes specified in the Grade VII Arabic curriculum. The design integrated the four components of the ARCS model Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction into each learning unit.

Various communicative learning activities were designed to encourage active student participation, including language games, pair dialogues, role-playing tasks, group discussions, short presentations, and reflective activities (Agbatogun, 2014). These activities were intended to provide students with meaningful opportunities to use Arabic in authentic communication contexts.

The instructional materials were developed based on the competencies outlined in the Grade VII Arabic textbook (KSKK, 2020), covering topics such as self-introduction and professions, school facilities, school supplies, addresses and directions, homes, and family daily activities. In addition, research instruments were designed during this phase, including observation sheets, interview guides, questionnaires, assessment rubrics, test blueprints, pretests, and posttests.

C. Development Phase

Following the design stage, the instructional product was developed and refined based on the principles of the ARCS model. The resulting product consisted of an integrated instructional design that incorporated learning objectives, teaching procedures, communicative activities, instructional media, and assessment instruments.

Before implementation, the product underwent expert validation to evaluate its quality and appropriateness (Asadollahi et al., 2025). The validation process involved assessments of the general instructional design, the ARCS-based instructional design, and the research instruments.

Table 2. Results of Product and Instrument Validation

Evaluated Aspect	Mean Score	Category
General Instructional Design	3.64	Highly Feasible
ARCS-Based Instructional Design	3.58	Highly Feasible
Research Instruments	3.86	Highly Feasible

The validation results indicate that all evaluated aspects achieved mean scores above 3.26, placing them within the highly feasible category. These findings suggest that the developed product adequately met the criteria related to instructional objectives, learning materials, communicative activities, ARCS motivational strategies, and assessment procedures.

Following expert validation, revisions were made based on the validators' recommendations. Improvements included adjustments to learning activities, refinement of instructional materials, enhancement of communicative tasks, and revision of several assessment instruments. The revision process ensured that the final product was both theoretically sound and practically applicable.

D. Implementation Phase

After completing the validation and revision processes, the ARCS-based mahārah kalām instructional design was implemented with seventh-grade students at SMP Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman over eight instructional sessions. The Arabic language teacher served as the classroom instructor, while the researcher observed the learning process and collected research data.

The implementation process was evaluated using an observation checklist developed according to the four components of the ARCS model. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Observation Results of ARCS-Based Learning Implementation

ARCS Component	Percentage	Category
Attention	90%	Excellent
Relevance	88%	Excellent
Confidence	85%	Excellent
Satisfaction	92%	Excellent
Average	88.75%	Excellent

The observation results demonstrate that all ARCS components were implemented successfully throughout the instructional process. Students showed strong attention to learning activities, connected learning materials to their daily experiences, demonstrated greater confidence in using Arabic, and expressed satisfaction through the reinforcement and feedback provided by the teacher.

These findings support Keller's (2010) assertion that attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction are critical factors in fostering student motivation and engagement.

In addition to classroom observations, product implementation was evaluated through teacher and student response questionnaires (Bahari et al., 2026). The teacher assigned an average score of 3.63, while students reported an average score of 3.48. Both scores fall within the excellent category, indicating that the developed instructional design was positively received and perceived as capable of creating a more communicative, engaging, and student-centered learning environment.

E. Evaluation Phase

The evaluation stage consisted of both formative and summative evaluation (Dolin et al., 2017). Formative evaluation was conducted throughout the development process through expert validation and product revision (Yüksel & Gündüz, 2017). Feedback from the validators was used to improve instructional materials, learning activities, assessment instruments, and motivational strategies embedded within the instructional design.

Summative evaluation focused on examining the effectiveness of the developed product after implementation (Smith & Brandenburg, 1991). The effectiveness of the ARCS-based instructional design was assessed through pretest and posttest scores, normality testing, a paired-samples t-test, and N-gain analysis.

Table 4. Pretest and Posttest Results

Test	Number of Female	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Average
Pretest	30	25	56	39.50
Posttest	30	63	94	79.50

The table above shows that the students' average scores increased from (39.50) on the pre-test to (79.50) on the post-test after implementing a speaking skills instruction design based on the ARCS model. The highest score also increased from (56) to (94), and the lowest score rose from 25 to 63, indicating a clear improvement in the students' communication proficiency following the implementation of the developed product.

Table 5. N-Gain Results

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ngain	30	.40	.88	.6672	.12284
Valid N (listwise)	30				

The results indicate a substantial improvement in students' performance, with the mean score increasing from 39.50 in the pretest to 79.50 in the posttest. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were examined using the Shapiro–Wilk normality test. The results yielded significance values of 0.080 for the pretest and 0.069 for the posttest, both exceeding the 0.05 threshold, indicating that the data were normally distributed.

Subsequently, the paired -samples t-test scores showed a mean difference of (-40.000), indicating an increase in the students' average scores on the posttest compared to the pretest. This improvement is evident in the rise in the average score from (39.50) on the pre-test to (79.50) on the post-test.

The calculated t-value was (-28.645), with a degree of freedom (df) of 29. The two-tailed significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) was less than 0.001, which is smaller than the accepted significance level (0.05).

Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, indicating a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the female students. This finding confirms that the developed instructional design had a significant positive effect on students' communicative competence.

To determine the magnitude of learning improvement, an N-gain analysis was conducted. The analysis yielded an average N-gain score of 0.667, which falls within the moderate improvement category. This result suggests that the ARCS-based instructional design contributed meaningfully to the enhancement of students' communicative competence.

The observed improvement indicates that integrating the components of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction into learning activities can create a more engaging and meaningful learning experience. These findings are consistent with Bakri (2019), who reported that communicative approaches can increase students' participation and confidence in speaking Arabic. The results also support the findings of Putri and Hidayat (2024), who demonstrated that the ARCS model effectively enhances

students' motivation and engagement in learning.

From the perspective of communicative competence, the improvement observed in this study suggests that students developed not only their linguistic abilities but also their capacity to use language appropriately within communicative contexts. This finding reinforces the theory of Canale and Swain, which conceptualizes communicative competence as comprising grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies that should be developed in an integrated manner through language instruction.

CONCLUSION

This study developed and evaluated an ARCS-based instructional design for mahārah kalām aimed at enhancing the communicative competence of seventh-grade students at SMP Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman. This is confirmed by the N-Gain score of (0.667), which falls into the moderate category, indicating a significant improvement in the students' communication skills. In addition, the results of the Paired Sample T-Test also confirm a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-tests, with a p-value of less than 0.05. This is consistent with the increase in the students' average score from 39.50 on the pre-test to 79.50 on the post-test. The findings demonstrate that the developed instructional design is feasible, well accepted by users, and effective in improving students' communicative competence. The integration of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction into speaking activities successfully fostered students' engagement, confidence, and participation in Arabic communication.

The significant improvement in students' learning outcomes indicates that combining motivational strategies with communicative learning activities can create a more meaningful and effective learning experience. Beyond strengthening students' linguistic abilities, the instructional design also supported the development of their ability to use Arabic appropriately in communicative contexts.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on motivation-based instructional design in Arabic language education by demonstrating the potential of the ARCS model to support communicative competence development. Practically, the proposed instructional design may serve as an alternative framework for Arabic language teachers seeking to create more engaging, student-centered, and communicative speaking instruction. Future studies, this study is limited to the application of speaking skills design to sevent-grade female students. Therefore, it is

suggested that future research apply this design to various educational levels and environments, as well as to other language, skills, accompanied by studies on its long-term impact, in order to verify its effectiveness and adaptability of the design.

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