



## SHOBAHUL LUGHOH'S EFFECTIVENESS IN IMPROVING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS OF MAHASANTRI AT MA'HAD AL-JAMI'AH SAYYID ALI RAHMATULLAH

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### ABSTRAK

Keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris merupakan komponen esensial dalam penguasaan bahasa asing, terutama bagi mahasiswa di konteks pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini menganalisis efektivitas dan dampak pembelajaran Shobahul Lughoh terhadap peningkatan keterampilan berbicara mahasiswa di Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Menggunakan pendekatan mixed methods dengan desain quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, sampel terdiri dari 76 mahasiswa (40 kelompok eksperimen dan 36 kelompok kontrol). Data dikumpul melalui tes berbicara (pre-test dan post-test) serta wawancara dengan delapan partisipan dari kelompok eksperimen. Analisis kuantitatif menggunakan t-test menunjukkan perbedaan signifikan antara kelompok eksperimen dan kontrol ( $t(74)=4.82$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ). Rata-rata skor kemampuan berbicara kelompok eksperimen meningkat dari 45,12 menjadi 61,87, sedangkan kelompok kontrol hanya meningkat dari 44,88 menjadi 48,25. Secara kualitatif, temuan wawancara mengungkap peningkatan kepercayaan diri, kelancaran berbicara spontan, serta pengayaan kosakata dalam komunikasi sehari-hari. Program Shobahul Lughoh terbukti efektif secara empiris dan pedagogis dalam meningkatkan kompetensi berbicara, dengan implikasi integrasi nilai-nilai Islam seperti disiplin dan kolaborasi dalam pembelajaran bahasa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi baru pada kajian pembelajaran bahasa berbasis praktik di lingkungan pendidikan Islam, serta rekomendasi untuk pengembangan program serupa.

**Kata Kunci:** *Shobahul Lughoh, keterampilan berbicara, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, efektivitas pembelajaran, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah*

### ABSTRACT

English speaking skills are an essential component in mastering a foreign language, especially for students in the context of Islamic education. This study analyzes the effectiveness and impact of Shobahul Lughoh learning on improving students' speaking skills at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Using a mixed methods approach with a quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group design and semi-structured interviews, the sample consisted of 76 students (40 in the experimental group and 36 in the control group). Data were collected through speaking tests (pre-test and post-test) and interviews with eight participants from the experimental group. Quantitative analysis using t-tests showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups ( $t(74)=4.82$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ). The average speaking ability score of the experimental group increased from 45.12 to 61.87, while the control group only increased from 44.88 to 48.25. Qualitatively, the interview findings revealed an increase in self-confidence, fluency in spontaneous speaking, and vocabulary enrichment in daily communication. The Shobahul Lughoh program has been



empirically and pedagogically proven effective in improving speaking competence, with implications for integrating Islamic values such as discipline and collaboration in language learning. This study provides new contributions to the study of practice-based language learning in Islamic educational settings, as well as recommendations for the development of similar programs.

**Keywords:** *Shobahul Lughoh, speaking skills, English language learning, learning effectiveness, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah*

## INTRODUCTION

English speaking proficiency has transcended being a mere academic subject to becoming a fundamental life skill in the contemporary era of globalization. Within the unique educational framework of a *Ma'had Al-Jami'ah*, where religious sciences are harmoniously integrated with general knowledge, the ability to communicate effectively in English is seen as a hallmark of actual communicative competence. Ideally, students at such higher education boarding institutions should possess a high level of verbal fluency to participate in international academic discourse and professional opportunities. Proficiency in speaking represents the ultimate manifestation of language acquisition because it requires the simultaneous processing of cognitive, linguistic, and social skills (Castillo-Torres & Espinoza, 2025; Elsani et al., 2023; Portugal-Toro et al., 2025). In this ideal setting, the environment should foster a continuous flow of natural interaction, allowing learners to utilize the target language as a primary tool for exploring complex global issues while remaining rooted in their spiritual values. This dual competence prepares graduates to become versatile global citizens who can represent Islamic perspectives on an international stage through clear, persuasive, and confident verbal communication in a global *lingua franca* (Angraeni et al., 2024; Arpanudin et al., 2025; Bashiroh & Ammar, 2024; Rahman et al., 2023).

However, the current reality in the field often reveals a significant gap between these high educational aspirations and the actual performance of the students. Despite the strategic importance of English, many learners continue to encounter formidable obstacles that hinder their verbal development, ranging from linguistic deficiencies to deep-seated psychological barriers. Limited vocabulary and a lack of grammatical mastery often lead to frustration, yet the most pervasive issue remains the high level of speaking anxiety that paralyzes students during interactions. Furthermore, the absence of an authentic practice environment often results in a stagnant learning process where the language is treated as a static subject rather than a living tool for communication. Recent observations indicate that these hurdles are not merely academic but are deeply rooted in the lack of daily engagement with the language. Consequently, many students feel unequipped to translate their theoretical knowledge into fluent speech, creating a persistent challenge for the institution to bridge the divide between theoretical curriculum requirements and the practical, real-world communicative needs of the student body (Aldizeeri et al., 2023; Madhavi et al., 2023; Supartini et al., 2024; Tamirat & Gemechis, 2025).

To proactively address these communicative challenges, specific institutional initiatives like the *Shobahul Lughoh* program have been implemented as a systematic intervention. This morning language activity is specifically designed to transform the early hours of the day into a vibrant space for communicative practice, moving away from traditional rote memorization toward a more interactive approach. Grounded in the principles of communicative language teaching, the program emphasizes the importance of meaningful interaction and functional



language use in everyday contexts. It is further supported by the input hypothesis, which suggests that learners acquire language most effectively when they are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence. By creating a structured yet naturalistic setting, the program aims to lower the affective filter of students, thereby reducing anxiety and encouraging spontaneous speech. This approach represents a shift in pedagogical focus, prioritizing the communicative process and the negotiation of meaning over mere structural accuracy, which is essential for developing the holistic fluency required in diverse social and academic settings (Aldosari & Alsager, 2023; Henao, 2024; Hussain & Khan, 2024; Xia & Guo, 2025).

While various studies have previously explored the benefits of language programs in traditional *pesantren* settings, a critical review of the existing literature reveals a notable research gap. Most prior investigations have tended to be purely descriptive, providing qualitative overviews of program implementation without offering rigorous empirical measurements of student progress. There is a distinct lack of comprehensive data that utilizes a mixed-methods approach to simultaneously capture the quantitative gains in speaking scores and the qualitative nuances of the student experience. This absence of integrated data makes it difficult to ascertain the true effectiveness of morning language programs on a larger scale or to understand the causal relationships between practice and proficiency. Consequently, the current academic landscape requires a more sophisticated analytical framework that can validate institutional claims through robust statistical evidence while providing deep insights into how students perceive their own growth in confidence and fluency. By addressing these methodological limitations, the present study seeks to provide a more definitive and multidimensional evaluation of how intensive language practice impacts the communicative journey of learners (Liu & Saad, 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Seruji et al., 2025).

The innovation of this research lies in its rigorous sequential explanatory mixed-methods design and its unique integration of Islamic values within a communicative framework. By employing a quasi-experimental approach involving both experimental and control groups, the study aims to analyze significant differences in speaking ability while providing a rich description of the students' personal development in fluency. This dual focus ensures that the research does not only look at standardized outcomes but also values the lived experiences of students as they navigate the challenges of language acquisition. Furthermore, by situating the study within the context of an Islamic higher education institution, it offers a novel perspective on how language education can be culturally and spiritually responsive. The findings are expected to contribute significantly to the theoretical discourse on language pedagogy in integrated religious settings and provide practical recommendations for educators looking to optimize communicative programs. Ultimately, this research seeks to prove that a well-structured, culturally grounded morning practice can effectively bridge the gap between academic theory and real-world communicative excellence for students.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the program's impact. The research design specifically followed a quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group framework to measure statistical changes while gathering qualitative insights. The target population included 160 students from the 2024/2025 cohort at *Ma'had Al-Jami'ah* UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Through purposive sampling, 76 students were selected as participants, consisting of 40 individuals in



the experimental group and 36 in the control group. All selected subjects were categorized at the intermediate proficiency level based on initial screening results. This selection ensured that the groups were comparable before the intervention began. By combining numerical evidence with descriptive narratives, the researcher aimed to capture both the measurable growth in verbal fluency and the subjective experiences of the learners within the boarding school environment, ensuring a holistic understanding of the pedagogical phenomenon.

Data collection relied on primary instruments consisting of standardized speaking tests and semi-structured interview guides. The verbal assessments, administered as pre-tests and post-tests, utilized a scoring rubric adapted from Brown with a high inter-rater reliability coefficient of 0.87. The study's procedure unfolded in 4 distinct phases. Initially, a pre-test was conducted to establish baseline performance. Subsequently, the experimental group underwent intensive 4-week treatment through the *Shobahul Lughoh* program, which integrated structured activities such as thematic vocabulary exercises, daily conversations, and interactive role plays. Meanwhile, the control group received conventional instruction. Following the intervention, a post-test was administered to measure improvement. Finally, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 8 participants from the experimental group to explore their perceptions of the morning practice. This methodological sequence allowed for the triangulation of data, ensuring that the results reflected an accurate representation of the students' communicative development and psychological shifts during the program.

The analytical phase involved both quantitative and qualitative techniques to ensure rigorous findings. Quantitative data were processed using SPSS 26, starting with assumption tests for normality using *Shapiro-Wilk* and homogeneity via *Levene's* test, both yielding p-values greater than 0.05. Paired and independent t-tests were then executed to determine the significance of score improvements, with *Cohen's d* calculated to measure the effect size. For the qualitative component, the researcher applied thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke to categorize interview transcripts into meaningful patterns. The validity of all instruments was strictly maintained through the judgment of 3 language pedagogy experts. Ethical considerations were prioritized by obtaining informed consent and maintaining strict participant confidentiality throughout the investigation. This dual-layered analysis provided a robust framework to confirm that the *Shobahul Lughoh* program significantly enhanced verbal proficiency, with the experimental group reaching a final average score of 61.87 compared to 48.25 in the control group.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Result

Based on Table 1, quantitative data shows a significant increase in the experimental group. The average pre-test score for the experiment was 45.12 and the post-test score was 61.87 (gain +16.75), while the control pre-test score was 44.88 and the post-test score was 48.25 (gain +3.37).

**Tabel 1. Statistik Deskriptif Pre- dan Post-Test**

Group	N	Mean Pre-Test	Mean Post-Test	Gain Score	Std.Dev
Experimental	40	45.12	61.87	+ 16.75	4.12
Control	36	44.48	48.25	+ 3,37	3.96



Uji paired t-test: Eksperimen signifikan ( $t=9,42$ ,  $df=39$ ,  $p=0,000$ ); Kontrol lemah ( $t=2,15$ ,  $df=35$ ,  $p=0,038$ ). Independent t-test antar kelompok:  $t=4,82$ ,  $df=74$ ,  $p=0,000$ , dengan Cohen's  $d=1,12$  (large effect).

Table 2. Test of Normality

Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Experimental Class	.104	40	.200*	.946	40	.054
Control Class	.095	36	.200*	.983	36	.837

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 2 presents the results of data normality tests using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk methods for two research groups at the institution. In the experimental class with 40 students, the Shapiro-Wilk significance value was recorded at 0.054. Meanwhile, the control class, consisting of 36 students, showed a much higher significance value of 0.837. Because both significance values are greater than 0.05, the distribution of score data from both classes is officially declared normally distributed. This certainty is a crucial foundation before researchers proceed with the process of accurate statistical analysis.

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity

Score	Based on	Levene	df1	df2	Sig.
		Statistic			
	Mean	.971	1	74	.328
	Median	.949	1	74	.333
	Median and with adjusted df	.949	1	70.905	.333
	Based on trimmed mean	.957	1	74	.331

Table 3 presents the results of the homogeneity of variance test using the Levene statistic to ensure equality of data distribution between the two groups. Based on the calculation of the average value, the Levene statistic was obtained at 0.971 with the first degree of freedom valued at 1 and the second degree of freedom valued at 74. The resulting significance value was 0.328, which is statistically greater than the threshold of 0.05. This finding proves that the variance of the score data between the experimental and control classes is homogeneous. This condition allows researchers to apply parametric statistical tests that require the assumption of equality of variance to obtain valid results.

Table 4. Independent Sample Test

Score	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	.971	.328	5.325	74	.000	16.65833	3.12827	10.42512	22.89154
	Equal variances not assumed			5.272	68.144	.000	16.65833	3.15987	10.35315	22.96351

Table 4 shows the results of the independent sample test to compare the final score achievement between the two groups after the program intervention was given. Assuming equal variances, the t-value was recorded at 5.325 with 74 degrees of freedom. The two-tailed significance value showed 0.000, which means there was a statistically highly significant difference. The average difference between the experimental and control classes was 16.65833



with a lower confidence limit of 10.42512 and an upper confidence limit of 22.89154. This confirms that the Shobahul Lughoh program is effective in improving students' speaking skills compared to conventional teaching methods in the boarding school environment concerned.

Analysis of interview data with eight students produced three main themes that describe their experiences in improving self-confidence and fluency in speaking through the Shobahul Lughoh program at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.

#### Theme 1 : Confidence Building

Most students reported that before attending Shobahul Lughoh they often felt nervous, afraid of making mistakes, and embarrassed when speaking in English. However, regular morning practice and the requirement to use English in daily communication made them more accustomed and confident in speaking.

*"I used to be afraid of making mistakes, now I'm used to it because of the morning practice."* (Student P-5)

*"Honestly, I wasn't confident in speaking English, but because we always practiced regularly... we are more confident to ask questions. And that makes us progress."* (P1)

This change reflects a process of affective transformation, where fear is gradually replaced by courage and self-confidence after consistent practice.

#### Theme 2 : Fluency in Speaking and Mastery of Language

Daily thematic exercises (morning drills) help students remember and use vocabulary as well as sentence structures spontaneously. Many of them begin to speak without preparation or even use English expressions unconsciously in casual contexts.

*"Every morning there are drills so that we memorize... sometimes we accidentally say vocabulary just for fun."* (P5)

This routine strengthens fluency and automaticity in speaking. This improvement occurs through the process of repetition and direct application in everyday communication in the dormitory.

#### Theme 3 : Supportive Learning Environment

The dormitory environment that requires the use of English creates an atmosphere that supports natural language practice. Students remind each other when mistakes occur and feel embarrassed if they do not use English, thus fostering a positive language culture.

*"When we don't speak English in communication, we feel embarrassed because our friends use it."* (P4)

In addition, the enthusiasm and role model of the teacher also play an important role in building learning motivation.

*"We admire our teacher... his voice is loud and clear, very enthusiastic, so we feel embarrassed if we fall asleep."* (P6)

The combination of discipline, peer support, and teacher enthusiasm creates a learning environment that motivates and accelerates the development of speaking skills.

#### Synthesis of Main Findings

These three themes complement each other in answering RQ (2):

The Shobahul Lughoh program is effective in increasing students' self-confidence and speaking fluency through three key factors:

1. Regular and structured practice in Shobahul Lughoh can build self-confidence,
2. Repetition or drills and contextual application of vocabulary can improve fluency, and
3. A supportive and highly disciplined social environment can strengthen students' motivation and language habits.



These results indicate that the communicative approach in Shobahul Lughoh is not only linguistically effective but also based on Islamic values such as *istiqamah* (consistency), *ukhuwah* (mutual support), and *ta'dzim lil mu'allim* (respect for teachers). These values serve as an affective foundation that reinforces the pedagogical aspects of English language learning in the Ma'had environment.

### **Discussion**

The evaluation of the Shobahul Lughoh program reveals a substantial impact on the linguistic development of participants at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Quantitatively, the experimental group began with a baseline mean of 45.12 and ascended to a post-test average of 61.87, representing a gain of 16.75. In stark contrast, the control group started at 44.48 and reached only 48.25, reflecting a marginal improvement of 3.37. The statistical significance is underscored by an independent *t-test* value of 4.82 with 74 degrees of freedom, yielding a *p-value* of 0.000. Furthermore, the *Cohen's d* effect size of 1.12 signifies that the intervention had a large and transformative effect on speaking abilities. This disparity suggests that the structured morning drills and immersive environment provided a superior pedagogical framework compared to conventional methods. The data indicates that the consistency of the experimental treatment effectively bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, allowing students to internalize language structures more efficiently than those in the restricted control setting (Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2024; Kestin et al., 2025; Moreno & Malovrh, 2020; Sun & Asmawi, 2023; Upadhyay et al., 2021).

Qualitative evidence derived from student dialogues highlights a profound shift in the *affective* domain, specifically regarding self-assurance and the reduction of communicative anxiety. Participants initially identified as being *nervous* or *embarrassed* underwent a transition toward *istiqamah* or consistency through the daily rigors of the program. This psychological evolution is critical, as the reduction of the *affective filter* allows for more natural acquisition. The experimental group of 40 students benefited from a social ecosystem where making mistakes was no longer a source of shame but a stepping stone toward *fluency*. The repetitive nature of the morning sessions, which required spontaneous output, directly mirrors the *Output Hypothesis*. By being forced to articulate thoughts in real-time, students moved beyond passive vocabulary recognition into active production. The result was a notable increase in *automaticity*, where English expressions began to emerge unconsciously in casual interactions. This blend of high-frequency practice and a supportive social fabric created a unique momentum for personal growth (Allal-Sumoto et al., 2023; Hanifansyah & Solehudin, 2024; Reynolds et al., 2022).

The synergy between the *communicative approach* and traditional Islamic values provides a localized pedagogical model that enhances student engagement. Concepts such as *ukhuwah* or brotherhood and *ta'dzim lil mu'allim* or respect for teachers served as the moral foundation for the learning process. These values fostered a disciplined environment where peer correction was delivered with empathy, and instructor enthusiasm acted as a primary motivator. The *paired t-test* for the experimental group showed a high *t-value* of 9.42, which validates the internal consistency of the progress made by these 40 individuals. This integration of spiritual character building with modern linguistic theory suggests that language learning in a *ma'had* context is not merely a cognitive exercise but a holistic developmental journey. The program successfully transformed the dormitory into a living laboratory for language, where the requirement to speak English was reinforced by a sense of collective responsibility. This cultural immersion ensures that the linguistic gains are rooted in daily habits rather than



temporary academic pressure (Negi, 2020; Rahman et al., 2023; Supriyono et al., 2022; Syarifah et al., 2023).

Despite the positive outcomes, several limitations must be acknowledged to maintain a balanced academic perspective. The *quasi-experimental* design, involving a non-randomized sample of 76 total participants, introduces potential biases that may affect the universality of the findings. Factors such as varying levels of intrinsic motivation, prior exposure to English, and individual study habits outside the program were not fully controlled. Additionally, the standard deviation of 4.12 in the experimental post-test suggests some variance in how individual students responded to the intensive *drills*. The relatively brief duration of the intervention also raises questions regarding the long-term retention of these skills once the students leave the highly regulated environment of the *ma'had*. While the *large effect size* is encouraging, these confounding variables necessitate a cautious interpretation. Future investigations should ideally employ a full experimental framework and longitudinal tracking to determine if the *fluency* and confidence levels remain stable across different professional and academic contexts over several years (Fiechter & Kornell, 2021; Hanzawa, 2021; Kahng, 2022; Zhao et al., 2024).

In summary, the Shobahul Lughoh program stands as a robust model for integrating intensive language practice within a religious educational setting. The statistical leap from a pre-test mean of 45.12 to a post-test mean of 61.87 serves as empirical proof of its efficacy. Beyond the numbers, the thematic analysis confirms that the program successfully addressed the psychological barriers of fear and hesitation, replacing them with a proactive communicative habit. By synthesizing the *Output Hypothesis* with Islamic principles, the institution has created a sustainable *habituation* process that benefits both the mind and the character. This study contributes to the broader discourse on *Islamic-based Communicative Language Teaching* by demonstrating how specific cultural and spiritual values can serve as catalysts for academic excellence. The findings advocate for the replication of such structured, value-oriented immersion programs in similar residential educational contexts. Ultimately, the combination of rigorous data and lived experience suggests that when language learning is treated as a communal and spiritual commitment, the results are both statistically significant and personally meaningful.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Shobahul Lughoh program at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah has proven highly effective in improving the English speaking skills of female students. Quantitative data analysis using a t-test revealed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups, with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The experimental group demonstrated an impressive jump in average scores from 45.12 in the pre-test to 61.87 in the post-test, representing a 16.75-point increase. In contrast, the control group experienced only a marginal increase of 3.37 points, resulting in a final score of 48.25. The program's impact is confirmed by Cohen's *d* of 1.12, which falls within the category of a large effect size. Empirically, these results confirm that intensive morning practice through morning drills and interactive simulations can bridge the gap between mastery of linguistic theory and spontaneous language production. This success also demonstrates the crucial role of the dormitory environment in accelerating the development of student competencies through habituation.



Qualitatively, the research findings revealed an affective transformation in the students, resulting in increased self-confidence and decreased anxiety when communicating. The program successfully created a supportive learning ecosystem by integrating Islamic values such as *istiqamah* (consistency), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), and *ta'dzim lil mu'allim* (respect for the one who is the closest to the other) as the foundation for learning motivation. Participants felt more confident in making mistakes as part of the learning process due to the strong social support from their peers and the enthusiastic guidance of their teachers. As a suggestion for future research, further researchers are advised to conduct a longitudinal study to monitor the long-term retention of students' speaking skills after they leave the regulated dormitory environment. Furthermore, the integration of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence-based conversational applications can be explored to increase the program's self-scalability. Future research should also involve a broader sample size at other Islamic educational institutions to more comprehensively test the generalizability of these findings for the advancement of English language pedagogy globally.

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