

## Arabic Conversation Problems Among Students at Prince of Songkla University: Influencing Factors and Demographic Differences

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### Abstract

This study investigates the challenges faced by non-native Arabic-speaking students in developing Arabic conversational skills at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus, Thailand. The study aims to identify students' perspectives on Arabic conversation problems and the factors influencing these difficulties, as well as to examine statistically significant differences based on demographic and educational variables. The study employed a descriptive-analytical approach using a questionnaire distributed to a randomly selected sample of 274 students. The findings revealed that student-related factors constituted the dominant challenges, particularly students' low motivation to speak Arabic and lack of confidence in oral communication. Environmental factors included limited family encouragement and the absence of Arabic use within the family

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environment, while university-related factors involved the frequent use of local languages by lecturers and peers instead of Arabic. The study also found statistically significant differences based on academic year and participation in Arabic language activities, whereas no significant differences were found based on gender, faculty, or mother tongue. Students who actively participated in Arabic language activities demonstrated more positive responses toward Arabic conversation learning. The findings indicate that improving Arabic conversational competence requires supportive communicative environments, increased opportunities for authentic Arabic interaction, communicative teaching practices, and active participation in Arabic language programs and activities both inside and outside the classroom.

**Keywords:** Arabic Conversation, Speaking Difficulties, Non-Native Arabic Learners, Arabic Language Learning, Communicative Competence

## Introduction

The Arabic language is one of the oldest living languages on Earth. Since the early days of Islam, Arabic has spread across the world reaching the far corners of the globe. It has grown alongside the Islamic faith and it has been closely tied to the lives of Muslims. It has become the language of knowledge, literature, politics, and civilization.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it serves as the language of religion and worship.<sup>2</sup>

In modern times, Arabic has attracted significant attention, with strong interest in learning it as a second language across many regions of the world. However, this widespread interest has led to obstacles and challenges in teaching

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<sup>1</sup> Dewi Chamidah and Rosyida Istiqomah, "Linguistic Activities for Improve Listening and Speaking Skills/ الأنشطة اللغوية لتنمية مهارة الاستماع والكلام," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 4, no. 2 (March 13, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v4i2.10528>; Siti Rahmah Borham, Saipolbarin Ramli, and Mohammad Taufiq Abdul Ghani, "AI Concepts Integration in Developing E-Muhadathat Kits For Non-Arabic Speakers," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 7, no. 3 (October 21, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v7i3.26568>; Kholisin Kholisin et al., "Developing Hiwaruna as Arabic Conversation Book for Speaking Skills in Islamic Boarding School," *Izdihar: Journal of Arabic Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature* 5, no. 2 (August 31, 2022): 209–24, <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v5i2.22935>.

<sup>2</sup> Amin Nasir, Juhri Juhri, and Abdul Karim, "Multilingual Education in Islamic Boarding Schools: Planning, Implementation and Institutional Policy/ Pendidikan Multi Bahasa Di Pesantren: Perencanaan, Implementasi Dan Kebijakan Kelembagaan," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 7, no. 2 (June 7, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v7i2.26151>; Noza Afisia, "Urgensi Bahasa Arab Bagi Hafizh Al-Qur'an," *FOKUS Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan*, vol. 1, December 16, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.29240/JF.V1I1.64>.

this language.<sup>3</sup> Among the most prominent of these challenges are the difficulties encountered in Arabic language conversation.

However, despite the increasing global interest in learning Arabic as a second language, many non-native learners continue to experience significant challenges in developing Arabic conversation skills (*muhadatsah*). Speaking skill is considered one of the most difficult aspects of foreign language acquisition because it requires learners to simultaneously master vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and communicative confidence.<sup>4</sup> In many non-Arabic-speaking contexts, students tend to possess theoretical knowledge of Arabic grammar and reading skills but demonstrate limited ability to communicate orally in authentic situations.<sup>5</sup> This condition is often caused by teacher-centered instruction, excessive emphasis on grammar translation methods, limited exposure to communicative Arabic environments, and students' anxiety or lack of confidence when speaking Arabic.

In addition, psychological factors such as fear of making mistakes, speaking anxiety, low self-confidence, and limited vocabulary frequently hinder students' participation in Arabic conversations. Environmental factors also contribute to

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<sup>3</sup> Noza Aflisia, Hendriyanto Hendriyanto, and Andewi Suhartini, "Arabic Language Development in Boarding Schools at the Industry Era 4.0: Potentials and Challenges," *Alsuna: Journal of Arabic and English Language* 5, no. 1 (May 26, 2022): 45–61, <https://doi.org/10.31538/alsuna.v5i1.2040>.

<sup>4</sup> Kasmantoni Kasmantoni, Noza Aflisia, and Isma Muhammad 'Atiyah, "Arabic Practice in the Language Environment I Mumrasah Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyah Fi Bi'Ah Lughawiyah," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 14, no. 2 (December 31, 2022): 470–85, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v14i2.12514>; Zamri Arifin and Zainuddin Ismail, "Arabic Speaking Skills as a PBJJ Course: Between Objectives and Reality," in *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 18 (Elsevier, 2011), 534–36, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.05.078>; Muhammad Ahsanul Husna et al., "Implementasi Materi Mahârah Al-Kalâm Dalam Transformasi Kurikulum Bahasa Arab Perspektif Actfl Pada Pondok Pesantren Salaf," *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 38–50, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v7i1.458>; Partomuan Harahap, "Perbandingan Pengajaran Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Dan Bahasa Inggris Di Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Curup," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 2 (December 29, 2017): 153, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v1i2.323>.

<sup>5</sup> Abdul Muid et al., "Learning Model of Speaking Arabic: Field Research Based on Constructivism Theory at Al Muhsinin Islamic Boarding School Kerinci," *Alsuna: Journal of Arabic and English Language* 3, no. 2 (November 25, 2020): 140–51, <https://doi.org/10.31538/alsuna.v3i2.822>; Agung Prawoto et al., "Muhadatsah Textbooks Based on Contextual Teaching and Learning in Islamic Boarding School I Kitab Ta'lim Al-Muhadatsah 'Ala Asasi Madkhal Al-Ta'Lim Wa Al-Ta'allum Al-Siyaqi Fi Al-Ma'had Al-Islami," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 15, no. 1 (June 11, 2023): 18–36, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v15i1.7292>; Fairuz Subakir Ahmad et al., "Teaching Materials Design for Muhadatsah Lesson for 7th Grade Students Muhammadiyah Boarding School Yogyakarta," *Ijazah Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 5, no. 3 (September 20, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v5i3.15501>; Joko Widodo and Muhammad Nanang Qosim, "Penilaian Kinerja Pada Pembelajaran Maharah Al-Kalam Level 1 Di Kursus Bahasa Arab Al-Arobiya Surakarta," *Uktub: Journal of Arabic Studies*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.32678/uktub.v1i2.5814>.

these challenges, particularly when students rarely use Arabic outside the classroom and receive limited support from family members, peers, or the surrounding community.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, instructional factors, including the use of local languages by teachers during classroom interaction and the lack of communicative learning strategies, may reduce students' opportunities to practice Arabic conversation effectively.

These challenges are particularly relevant in the context of Prince of Songkla University, where Arabic is taught as a foreign language within a multilingual and multicultural environment. Students at this university commonly speak Thai and Malay in their daily communication, while Arabic is primarily used in formal academic settings. This sociolinguistic condition makes Arabic conversation learning unique because students must navigate multiple languages simultaneously while attempting to develop communicative competence in Arabic. Moreover, the university has a strong Islamic academic tradition that emphasizes Arabic as the language of Islamic studies, making Arabic conversation skills essential not only for academic communication but also for understanding Islamic sources and engaging in broader international Islamic scholarship.

Previous studies have demonstrated that speaking skills in foreign language learning are influenced by various linguistic, psychological, pedagogical, and learning-environment factors.<sup>7</sup> The study conducted by Baiq Suprapti Handini et al. found that limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, fear, and lack of self-confidence constitute the main obstacles to students' speaking skills.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Silvia Torong et al. proved that the question-and-answer method effectively enhances students' participation and speaking ability through a more active and communicative learning atmosphere.<sup>9</sup> In general, these studies confirm that foreign language speaking proficiency is influenced by teaching methods, learning environments, prior learning experiences, and students' psychological factors. Recent studies in the context of foreign language learning also indicate that speaking difficulties remain a significant issue in higher education and second-language learning. Research on EFL students' speaking challenges revealed that

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<sup>6</sup> Noza Aflisia and Partomuan Harahap, "Eksistensi Biah Lughawiyah Sebagai Media Berbahasa Arab Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Muhadatsah Mahasiswa Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Curup," *Lisanul' Arab: Journal of Arabic Learning and Teaching* 8, no. 1 (2019), <http://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/laa>.

<sup>7</sup> Didik Hartono et al., "The Impacts of Teacher's Oral Corrective Feedback to Students' Psychological Domain: A Study on EFL Speech Production," *Cogent Education* 9, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2152619>.

<sup>8</sup> Baiq Suprapti Handini et al., "An Analysis on Students' Difficulties in Speaking," *Humanitatis : Journal of Language and Literature* 7, no. 2 (July 3, 2021): 187–92, <https://doi.org/10.30812/humanitatis.v7i2.1248>.

<sup>9</sup> Silvia Torong, Widya Ambarita, and Nikerian W. Manik, "Implementation of Question and Answer Method in Teaching Speaking Skill at Eight Grade of UPTD SMP Negeri 9 Pematang Siantar," *Journal Corner of Education, Linguistics, and Literature* 2, no. 3 (February 25, 2023): 265–71, <https://doi.org/10.54012/jcell.v2i3.142>.

low self-confidence, limited vocabulary, speaking anxiety, pronunciation errors, and fear of making mistakes are among the major barriers to speaking proficiency.<sup>10</sup> Other studies have shown that learning experiences excessively focused on grammar instruction result in weak communicative competence among students, whereas the implementation of communicative strategies and interactive learning environments can improve students' speaking performance.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, technological developments in language learning have increasingly been utilized to enhance speaking skills, such as the use of Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR), Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based platforms, and ChatGPT-assisted presentation practices, which have been shown to reduce speaking anxiety and increase students' engagement in oral communication.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, previous studies consistently emphasize that foreign language speaking ability is strongly influenced by psychological factors, instructional strategies, learning experiences, educational technology, and supportive communicative environments.

Nevertheless, previous studies have predominantly focused on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills and have mainly highlighted instructional methods, psychological factors, or the use of technology in foreign language learning in general. Research addressing Arabic conversation problems, particularly among non-native speaker students in Southeast Asian higher education institutions, remains relatively limited. In addition, only a few studies have simultaneously integrated student-related, family-environment, and institutional factors in analyzing barriers to Arabic conversation. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive analysis of Arabic conversation problems among students at Prince of Songkla University by connecting personal, environmental, and university-related factors while also examining differences based on demographic variables and students' participation in Arabic language activities.

The research aims to identifying the perspectives of Prince Songkla University, Pattani students on Arabic language conversation problems and the influencing factors, and identifying statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample attributed to its variables.

The research relies on fundamental methodologies:

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<sup>10</sup> Elisathusilawani Elisathusilawani, "Exploring EFL Students' Speaking Challenges in Their Speaking for Social Purposes," *Journal of English and Education (JEE)* 9, no. 1 (May 31, 2023): 10–21, <https://doi.org/10.20885/jee.v9i1.28010>.

<sup>11</sup> Mu Hsuan Chou, "Communication Strategies, Difficulties, and Speaking Tasks in Foreign Language Learning," *SAGE Open* 14, no. 3 (July 1, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241266324>.

<sup>12</sup> Muzakki Bashori et al., "Effects of ASR-Based Websites on EFL Learners' Vocabulary, Speaking Anxiety, and Language Enjoyment," *System* 99 (July 1, 2021): 102496, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102496>.

*First:* The descriptive approach is used in the theoretical framework of the study, which involves gathering sources and research, elucidating the methods employed in teaching Arabic language to non-native speakers, and defining conversational skills.

*Second:* The analytical and field approach is based on deriving results, which the study will obtain from the necessary data through the use of a questionnaire in addition to desk research to gather relevant information. This is done to identify significant differences in the sample's responses. The study will employ the statistical software package SPSS, version twenty, to analyze the relevant data. A Field Study on a Sample of Prince Songkla University Students, Pattani Campus, Thailand. The sample will be chosen randomly and is referred to as a 'simple random sample.

## Findings and Discussion

### Perspectives of Prince Songkla University, Pattani Students on Arabic Language Conversation Problems and The Influencing Factors

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the College of Islamic Sciences at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus, are among the oldest higher education institutions that have undertaken the responsibility of teaching the Arabic language to the residents of this region for decades. This chapter delves into the field study from several perspectives, including:

The first perspective: The study population and its sample. The second perspective: Constructing the study tools and materials. The third perspective: Statistical analysis and its results.

#### *Firstly,* the Study Population and Its Sample

The research community consists of students at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus, in Thailand. The research selected a random sample of 274 students from Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus. The distribution of the sample is as follows:

Table 1. Respondents' Sociodemographic Characteristics

		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	M	65	23.7%
	F	209	76.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>274</b>	<b>100</b>
Faculty	FaIS	219	79.9%
	FHSS	55	20.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>274</b>	<b>100</b>
Level of Study	1 <sup>st</sup> year	80	29.2%
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	86	31.4%
	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	55	20.1%
	4 <sup>th</sup> year	53	19.3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>274</b>	<b>100</b>
Mother tongue	Thai	109	39.8%
	Malay	150	54.7%
	Arabic	14	5.1%

	Other	1	0,4%
Total		274	100
Number of Arabic language events in which I participated	No	35	12.8%
	1-3	111	40.5%
	4+	128	46.7%
Total		274	100

From the previous table, the following can be observed: (1) the selected sample included 65 in the "males" category, accounting for 23.7% of the study sample, while the "females" category included 209 students, constituting 76.3% of the study sample, (2) the "College of Islamic Sciences" contributed 219 students (79.9%) to the study sample, while the "College of Humanities and Social Sciences," contributed 55 students (20.1%). (3) the individuals in the first-year sample were 80 students, representing 29.2% of the study sample, while the second-year sample comprised 86 students (31.4%) of the study sample. In the third year, 55 students accounted for 20.1% of the study sample, and in the fourth year, there were 53 students (19.3%) of the study sample, (4) sample comprised 109 students (39.8%), whose native language is Thai, 150 students whose native language is Malay (54.7%), and 14 students whose native language is Arabic (5.1%). There was one student whose native language was another language, accounting for 0.4% of the sample, and (5) the number of individuals in the sample who did not participate in Arabic language activities was 35 students, representing 12.8% of the sample, and the number of participants in Arabic language activities from one to three years was 111 students, making up 40.5% of the sample. The number of participants with four or more years of participation was 128 students, constituting 46.7% of the sample.

*Secondly*, Study Tools and Materials

In constructing the questionnaire, the researcher relied on the theoretical framework and relevant prior studies on the study's topic. The questionnaire consisted of three perspectives, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Survey Axes and the Number of Their Items

No.	Axis	Number of Items
1	Axis 1: Factors Affecting Students	16
2	Axis 2: Factors Affecting the Environment	5
3	Axis 3: Factors Affecting the University	20
	Total	41

After completing the construction of the study's tool, its validity was measured as follows:

Expert Validity (Content Validity): The study's tool was presented to 10 experts with expertise in various fields, both internal and external to the university, to ensure clarity of expressions and its suitability for the study's objectives. The experts suggested modifications to the initial information and

proposed changes and deletions of some questionnaire items. The researchers implemented the required modifications until the questionnaire was finalized, containing a total of 41 items.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the internal consistency validity of the study's tool. This calculation involved assessing the correlation between each axis's score and the total score of the questionnaire. As shown in the following table:

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Scale Items

	#	R
1 <sup>st</sup> Student	1.	0.539**
	2.	0.520**
	3.	0.556**
	4.	0.562**
	5.	0.615**
	6.	0.569**
	7.	0.685**
	8.	0.649**
	9.	0.649**
	10.	0.567**
	11.	0.586**
	12.	0.676**
	13.	0.692**
	14.	0.637**
	15.	0.631**
	2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	16.
17.		0.493**
18.		0.781**
19.		0.762**
20.		0.594**
3 <sup>rd</sup> University	21.	0.635**
	22.	0.580**
	23.	0.405**
	24.	0.646**
	25.	0.720**
	26.	0.693**
	27.	0.685**
	28.	0.631**
	29.	0.696**
	30.	0.688**
	31.	0.692**
	32.	0.685**
	33.	0.583**
	34.	0.410**
	35.	0.427**
	36.	0.537**
	37.	0.646**

38.	0.622**
39.	0.693**
40.	0.569**
41.	0.554**

\*\* Statistical function at level (0.01)

Statistically significant at the level (0.01), Table 3 shows that the correlation coefficients of each statement with the total score of the scale are positive and statistically significant at the level (0.01). This indicates the questionnaire’s reliability and confirms its internal consistency. Therefore, these results demonstrate the reliability and validity of the study tool for field application.

Reliability of the study tool: To ensure the reliability of the study tool, the "Cronbach's Alpha" coefficient was used. The reliability coefficient for the questionnaire is as follows:

Table 4. Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Coefficients

#		a
1	1 <sup>st</sup> Student	0.80
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	0.70
3	3 <sup>rd</sup> University	0.91
	M	0.80

Table 4 shows that the reliability coefficient for the first axis: (Student) is 0.80, for the second axis: (Environment) is 0.70, and for the third axis: (College) is 0.91. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for all questionnaire axes is 0.80, which is statistically high, indicating the suitability of the study tool for use.

Study Implementation Procedures: After constructing, validating, and ensuring the reliability of the study tool, it became ready for field application. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to male and female students from the College of Islamic Sciences and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus. The researchers collected 274 questionnaires.

*Thirdly:* Statistical Analysis and Results

The research relied on the interpretation of the study's results using a Likert five-point scale as follows

Table 5. Interpretation of Likert Scale Scores

Choices:	Strongly Agree,	Agree,	Neutral,	Disagree,	Strongly Disagree
Weight:	5	4	3	2	1
Scale	Scale	Scale	Scale	Scale	Scale
Correction:	Correction: 5.00-4.21	Correction: 4.20-3.41	Correction: 3.40-2.61	Correction: 2.60-1.81	Scale Correction: 1.80-1.00

To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the responses of the study sample were calculated:

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire Responses

	N*=274	
	Mean	Standard Deviation
1 <sup>st</sup> Student	3.42	1.1
2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	3.32	1.2
3 <sup>rd</sup> University	3.00	1.1
M	3.2	

Table 6 shows that the overall arithmetic mean of the opinions of the study sample regarding the questionnaire items is (3.2), indicating that the study sample members are neutral regarding the survey items.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Responses on the First Axis: Student

Item #		Percentage					M	SD	Ranking	
		St Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	St disagree				
1	I don't need to speak Arabic	36.1	33.9	17.5	5.1	5.1	3.9	1.2	1	Agree
15	I don't trust myself when I speak Arabic.	4.0	18.2	33.6	15.7	15.7	2.7	1.1	16	Neutral
	M						3.4	2		Agree

Table 7 reveals that the overall arithmetic mean of the opinions of the study sample is 3.42, indicating agreement among the study sample members on the items of the first axis: The Student.

The table also shows that the opinions of the study sample members tended towards neutral. Furthermore, Table 7 shows that the opinions of the study sample members represented in item 1, which is "I do not need to speak Arabic," ranked first with an arithmetic mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 1.2, indicating agreement with this statement. On the other hand, item 15, which is "I lack confidence when speaking in Arabic," ranked last with an arithmetic mean of 2.7 and a standard deviation of 1.1, indicating neutrality towards this statement.

Table 8. Students' Responses on the Second Axis: Environmental

Item #		Percentage				M	SD	Ranking		
		St Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree					St disagree
2	My family doesn't encourage me to study in Arabic.	30.3	39.4	19.3	6.6	4.4	3.9	1.2	1	Agree
1	My family doesn't speak Arabic with me.	7.3	12.4	19.0	27.7	33.6	2.4	1.1	5	Disagree
M						3.32	Agree			

Table 8 indicates that the overall arithmetic mean of the study sample's opinions is (3.32). This result suggests that the study sample members agree on the items of the second axis: Environment. The table also shows that the opinions of the study sample members leaned towards agreement.

Additionally, Table 8 shows that the study sample's opinions represented by item 2, which is "My family does not encourage me to study in Arabic," ranked first with an arithmetic mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 1.1. This indicates agreement with this statement. On the other hand, item 1, which is "My family does not speak Arabic with me," ranked fifth and last with an arithmetic mean of 2.4 and a standard deviation of 1.3, indicating disagreement with this statement.

Table 9. Students' Responses on the Third Axis: University

Item #		Percentage				M	SD	Ranking		
		St Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree					St disagree
1	Arabic teachers explain in the local language	24.1	31.0	27.01	12.8	5.1	3.6	1.2	1	Agree
13	My colleagues don't speak Arabic with me.	2.9	9.5	27.7	35.0	24.8	2.3	1.1	20	Disagree
M						3.00	Agree			

Table 9 shows that the overall arithmetic mean of the study sample's opinions is 3.00. This suggests that the study sample members are neutral regarding the items of the third axis: University. It is also evident from the table that the opinions of the study sample members tended towards neutrality.

Furthermore, Table 9 shows that the study sample's opinions represented by item 1, which is "Arabic language teachers explain in the local language,"

ranked first with an arithmetic mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.2. This result indicates agreement with this statement. On the other hand, item 13, which is "My colleagues do not speak Arabic with me," ranked twentieth and last with an arithmetic mean of 2.3 and a standard deviation of 1.3, indicating disagreement with this statement.

The findings of this study indicate that Arabic conversation problems among students at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus are influenced by multiple interrelated factors, namely student-related factors, environmental factors, and university-related factors. The first axis, namely student factors, obtained the highest mean score ( $M = 3.42$ ), indicating that internal student aspects constitute the dominant challenges in Arabic conversation learning. The finding that many students agreed with the statement "I do not need to speak Arabic" reflects a relatively low communicative motivation toward Arabic language use. This condition suggests that students may perceive Arabic primarily as an academic subject rather than as a practical means of communication. In addition, the relatively neutral responses regarding confidence in speaking Arabic indicate that psychological barriers such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes continue to affect students' speaking performance. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing that motivation, self-confidence, and communicative needs significantly influence second-language acquisition and oral proficiency development. Therefore, improving students' communicative awareness through interactive speaking activities, authentic language exposure, and confidence-building strategies is essential to strengthening Arabic conversation competence among university students.

Furthermore, the environmental and university factors also contribute significantly to students' Arabic conversation problems. Environmental factors obtained a mean score of 3.32, indicating that students generally agreed that family and surrounding social conditions influence their Arabic speaking ability. The finding that families rarely encourage the use of Arabic demonstrates the limited linguistic support students receive outside the classroom. Similarly, university-related factors revealed a neutral tendency ( $M = 3.00$ ), suggesting that institutional support for Arabic communication practices remains insufficiently optimal. The tendency of lecturers to explain Arabic lessons in the local language and the limited use of Arabic among peers indicate that Arabic is not consistently practiced as a communicative medium within the academic environment. These conditions reduce students' opportunities for meaningful interaction and natural language practice, which are crucial in developing speaking fluency. Consequently, universities should create a more supportive Arabic-speaking environment by encouraging Arabic interaction inside and outside classrooms, organizing Arabic language activities regularly, and strengthening language immersion programs. Such efforts may help students develop greater confidence, communicative competence, and active engagement in Arabic conversation practices.

### Statistically Significant Differences in the Responses of the Study Sample Attributed to Its Variables

To verify the hypothesis that there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level the responses of the study sample across the variables (Gender: Male / Female) and (College: Islamic / Humanities), a t-test was used. Refer to Table 10.

Table 10. T-Test Results by Gender and Faculty

Items	Gender & Faculty	N	M	SD	df	T	Sig
1 <sup>st</sup> Student	M	65	48.93	10.8	272	1.9	n.s.
	F	209	52.10	11.6			
	FaIS	219	51.70	11.40	272	3.9	n.s.
	FHSS	55	49.80	11.80			
2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	M	65	15.10	3.20	272	1.50	n.s.
	F	209	17.10	3.80			
	FaIS	219	16.60	3.70	272	1.20	n.s.
	FHSS	55	16.50	3.80			
3 <sup>rd</sup> University	M	65	56.8	10.40	272	0.291	n.s.
	F	209	59.60	14.20			
	FaIS	219	60.60	13.20	272	4.30	n.s.
	FHSS	55	52.30	12.30			

To verify the hypothesis that there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the responses of the study sample attributed to the variable (Academic Year: First, Second, Third, Fourth), a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Refer to Table 11.

Table 11. One-Way ANOVA Results Across Academic Years (N=274)

		S. of Square	Df	M of Square	F	Sig
1 <sup>st</sup> Student	Between groups	2742.50	3	914.20	7.50	s.
	Within groups	33035.40	270	122.40		
2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	Between groups	207.95	3	69.40	5.40	s.
	Within groups	3495.92	270	12.10		
3 <sup>rd</sup> University	Between groups	4248.120	3	1416.10	8.70	s.
	Within groups	44453.40	270	164.70		

The significance level is set at 0.05.

Table 12. Differences in Arithmetic Means

1 <sup>st</sup> Student					2 <sup>nd</sup> environment					3 <sup>rd</sup> University							
M	year	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	M	year	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	M	year	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
56.10	1 <sup>st</sup>		*	*	*	17.90	1 <sup>st</sup>		*		*	64.20	1 <sup>st</sup>		*	*	*

49.50	2 <sup>nd</sup>	*	16.10	2 <sup>nd</sup>	*	58.30	2 <sup>nd</sup>	*
50.30	3 <sup>rd</sup>	*	16.40	3 <sup>rd</sup>	*	57.80	3 <sup>rd</sup>	*
47.10	4 <sup>th</sup>	*	15.60	4 <sup>th</sup>	*	52.10	4 <sup>th</sup>	*

Sig\*

Table 11 shows the results of one-way analysis of variance for the responses of the study sample concerning the variables (First Year), (Second Year), (Third Year), and (Fourth Year). It reveals statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample. Table 12 shows the differences in arithmetic means. The following is an analysis of this table: The results indicate statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample towards the first axis (The Student) and the third axis: The University. Refer to Table 12. These differences were in favor of the first year compared to the Second, Third, and Fourth Years), and vice versa. This comparison suggests that the responses of the study sample in the first year were higher than the responses of the study sample in the Second, Third, and Fourth Years. It also indicates statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample towards the second axis: The Environment. Refer to Table 12. These differences favored the first Year over the second and fourth Years, and vice versa. This suggests that those in the first year were higher than the responses of the study sample in the second and fourth years. This indicates that students' comprehension increases as they progress in their academic years.

To verify the hypothesis that there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the responses of the study sample attributed to the variable (Mother Tongue: Thai / Malay / Arabic / Other), a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Refer to Table 13.

Table 13. One-Way ANOVA Results Across Mother Tongue Groups (N=274)

		S. of Square	Df	M of Square	F	Sig
1 <sup>st</sup> Student	Between groups	663.30	3	221.10	1.70	n.s.
	Within groups	35114.50	270	130.10		
2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	Between groups	10.70	3	31.10	0.80	n.s.
	Within groups	13.60	270	3671.10		
3 <sup>rd</sup> University	Between groups	1032.50	3	344.20	1.10	n.s.
	Within groups	47668.10	270	176.60		

The table shows no significant differences; therefore the Scheffé test is not needed. To verify the hypothesis that there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.50 level between the responses of the study sample attributed to the variable (Number of Participations in Arabic Language Activities: None, 1-3, 4 or more), a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Refer to Table 14.

Table 14. One-Way ANOVA Results Across Participation Levels in Arabic Language Activities (N=274)

		S. of Square	df	M of Square	F	Sig
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1 <sup>st</sup> Student	Between groups	663.30	3	221.10	1.70	s.
	Within groups	35114.50	270	130.60		
2 <sup>nd</sup> environment	Between groups	207.95	3	69.40	5.40	n.s.
	Within groups	3495.92	270	12.10		
3 <sup>rd</sup> University	Between groups	4248.120	3	1416.10	8.70	n.s.
	Within groups	44453.40	270	164.70		

Table 15. Differences in Arithmetic Means, Differences between arithmetic means

M	N	No	1 <sup>st</sup> Student	
			1-3	4+
50.10		No		
48.10		1-3		*
53.50		4 +	*	

Sig\*

Table 14 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance for the responses of the study sample concerning the variable (None), (1-3), and (4 or more). It reveals statistically significant differences. Table 15 displays the differences in arithmetic means. The results indicate statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample towards the first axis (1-3). Refer to Table 14. These differences favor the 1-3 group compared to the (4 or more) group, and vice versa. This suggests that the responses of the study sample in the (4 or more) group are higher than those in the (None and 1-3) groups.

The inferential statistical analysis provides deeper insight into the factors influencing Arabic conversation problems among students at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus. The t-test analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in students' responses based on gender and faculty variables. This finding indicates that male and female students, as well as students from the Faculty of Islamic Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, experience relatively similar challenges in Arabic conversation. Such a result suggests that the problems related to Arabic speaking ability are not determined by demographic or institutional background differences, but rather stem from broader linguistic, psychological, and environmental factors experienced collectively by students. In contrast, the one-way ANOVA analysis based on academic year demonstrated statistically significant differences across the three study axes. First-year students consistently showed higher mean scores compared to students in the second, third, and fourth years. This finding may indicate that beginner students possess stronger enthusiasm, motivation, or expectations toward Arabic language learning, whereas senior students tend to experience reduced communicative engagement due to prolonged exposure to limited Arabic-speaking practices within the academic environment. The decline in responses across academic levels also suggests that the university environment

may not sufficiently sustain students' motivation and active use of Arabic communication over time.

Furthermore, the analysis based on mother tongue revealed no statistically significant differences among Thai, Malay, Arabic, and other language groups. This result implies that students' native language backgrounds do not substantially influence their perceptions of Arabic conversation problems. In other words, the challenges faced by students are relatively universal regardless of linguistic background. However, participation in Arabic language activities demonstrated a significant effect, particularly on the first axis related to student factors. Students who participated in four or more Arabic language activities showed higher mean scores compared to those who never participated or only participated one to three times. This finding highlights the importance of extracurricular language exposure and active participation in Arabic-related activities in strengthening students' communicative competence and confidence. Frequent involvement in Arabic programs may provide students with authentic opportunities to practice speaking, interact socially using Arabic, and develop positive attitudes toward language learning. Therefore, the findings emphasize that the improvement of Arabic conversation skills requires not only classroom instruction but also continuous communicative practice through language activities, immersion programs, student organizations, and supportive academic environments that encourage consistent Arabic language use.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that Arabic conversation difficulties among students at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus are influenced by interconnected student-related, environmental, and university-related factors. Student-related factors emerged as the most dominant challenges, particularly students' low motivation to speak Arabic and lack of confidence in oral communication. Environmental factors were reflected in the limited support from family members and the minimal use of Arabic in daily interaction, while university-related factors included the frequent use of local languages by lecturers and peers instead of Arabic. The study also found no statistically significant differences based on gender, faculty, or mother tongue, whereas significant differences were identified based on academic year and participation in Arabic language activities. Students who actively participated in Arabic language programs demonstrated more positive perceptions toward Arabic conversation learning. These findings indicate the importance of creating supportive communicative environments, increasing opportunities for authentic Arabic interaction, and implementing communicative teaching practices to improve students' Arabic speaking competence.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the study was conducted only at Prince Songkla University, Pattani Campus, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. Second, the study relied primarily on questionnaire data, which may not fully capture students'

actual speaking performance and communicative behavior in real situations. Third, the research focused mainly on students' perceptions without incorporating classroom observations, interviews, or experimental teaching interventions. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve broader samples from different universities and countries, apply mixed-method or experimental research designs, and investigate the effectiveness of communicative teaching strategies, language immersion programs, and technology-assisted learning tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) in improving Arabic conversation skills among non-native speakers.

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