

## THE EFFECT OF MINDFULNESS TRAINING ON REDUCING ANXIETY IN ARABIC SPEAKING AMONG STUDENTS AT MTs WAHID HASYIM 1 DAU MALANG

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### ABSTRACT

*Speaking anxiety is a psychological factor that frequently inhibits students' confidence and fluency in Arabic language learning. One approach with potential to address this issue is Mindfulness Training, which emphasizes non-judgmental awareness of thoughts, emotions, and bodily responses. This study aimed to analyze the effect of Mindfulness Training in reducing Arabic speaking anxiety in terms of physiological, cognitive, and affective aspects, as well as to identify the aspect most influenced by the intervention. A quantitative approach was employed using a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design. The participants consisted of 58 eighth-grade students at MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau, Malang. Data were collected through an Arabic speaking anxiety questionnaire administered before and after six intervention sessions, and analyzed using paired sample t-tests and the Friedman test. The results revealed a significant reduction in speaking anxiety across all aspects, with a significance value of  $p = 0.000$ . The cognitive aspect showed the greatest decrease ( $\Delta = 9.97$ ), followed by the physiological ( $\Delta = 8.48$ ) and affective aspects ( $\Delta = 7.26$ ). These findings confirm that Mindfulness Training is effective in reducing Arabic speaking anxiety, particularly through changes in students' cognitive processes.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking anxiety, Mindfulness training, Arabic language learning*

### ABSTRAK

Kecemasan berbicara merupakan salah satu faktor psikologis yang sering menghambat keberanian dan kelancaran siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab. Salah satu pendekatan yang berpotensi mengatasi permasalahan tersebut adalah *Mindfulness Training*, yang menekankan kesadaran terhadap pikiran, emosi, dan respons tubuh secara non-judgmental. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh *Mindfulness Training* dalam mengurangi kecemasan berbicara bahasa Arab ditinjau dari aspek fisiologis, kognitif, dan afektif, serta mengidentifikasi aspek yang paling terpengaruh oleh intervensi tersebut. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain pra-eksperimen tipe *one-group pretest–posttest*. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas 58 siswa kelas VIII MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau Malang. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket kecemasan berbicara bahasa Arab sebelum dan sesudah intervensi selama enam pertemuan, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan uji *paired sample t-test* dan uji Friedman. Hasil penelitian

menunjukkan adanya penurunan kecemasan yang signifikan pada seluruh aspek, dengan nilai signifikansi  $p = 0,000$ . Aspek kognitif mengalami penurunan terbesar ( $\Delta = 9,97$ ), diikuti aspek fisiologis ( $\Delta = 8,48$ ) dan afektif ( $\Delta = 7,26$ ). Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa *Mindfulness Training* efektif dalam mengurangi kecemasan berbicara bahasa Arab, terutama melalui perubahan pada aspek kognitif siswa.

**Kata kunci:** Kecemasan berbicara, Mindfulness training, Pembelajaran bahasa Arab

## A. Introduction

One of the primary skills that must be mastered in Arabic language learning is speaking skill (maharah al-kalām). This skill serves as an indicator of the extent to which learners are able to use the language actively in real-life communication (Nafisah 2022). According to (Richards 2008), speaking ability is the most challenging competence in second language learning because it requires the integration of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and the ability to interact spontaneously (Maulidiyah and Yurisa 2025). In the Indonesian context, Arabic language instruction still tends to emphasize structural aspects such as nahwu and šarf, while communicative aspects receive relatively little attention (Ike Nur Isnaini and Niswah MZ. 2024). As a result, although students may possess adequate grammatical knowledge, they often experience

difficulties in expressing themselves orally, leading to a gap between passive competence and active competence in Arabic language proficiency (Pawi et al. 2025).

A phenomenon frequently observed in foreign language learning, including Arabic, is (foreign language anxiety). (Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope 1986) define foreign language anxiety as feelings of tension, nervousness, and worry experienced by learners when engaging in language learning situations. This anxiety may manifest in the form of physiological symptoms such as heart palpitations and muscle tension, cognitive symptoms including negative thoughts and fear of making errors, as well as affective symptoms such as feelings of embarrassment, panic, and low self-esteem (Gregersen and MacIntyre 2014). In many cases, such anxiety not only inhibits communicative fluency but

also reduces students' confidence to speak (Liu and Jackson 2008).

In Arabic language learning, speaking anxiety becomes evident when students are required to perform in front of the class, participate in discussions, or deliver presentations. Many students choose to remain silent, are reluctant to ask questions, or avoid active involvement (Mujiburrahman et al. 2023). Previous studies have indicated that psychological factors, particularly anxiety, constitute one of the primary barriers to foreign language acquisition (Mahmood and Iqbal 2018). Similar findings have also been reported in the context of Arabic language learning, where students tend to be passive when instruction emphasizes oral practice (Bukhori, Yanti, and Rahmawati 2023). These findings suggest that speaking anxiety is a common phenomenon experienced by many learners of Arabic (Aulia, Abidin, and Mardhiyyah 2025).

Based on preliminary interviews and classroom observations conducted at MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau, Malang, it was found that most students still feel nervous, afraid of making mistakes, and lack confidence

when required to speak Arabic in front of the class. This condition leads to low levels of student participation and indicates that the primary obstacles faced by students lie not merely in their mastery of learning content, but rather in psychological aspects. These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating that foreign language anxiety is negatively correlated with both participation and language learning achievement (J. M. Dewaele 2017).

One approach with the potential to address speaking anxiety is Mindfulness Training. (Kabat-Zinn 2003a) defines mindfulness as full awareness of the present moment in a non-judgmental manner, while (Bishop et al. 2004) emphasize that mindfulness involves the ability to regulate attention and adopt an attitude of acceptance toward internal experiences. Through practices such as mindful breathing, body scanning, and self-reflection, mindfulness trains individuals to become aware of their thoughts and emotions without becoming absorbed in negative reactions (Bukhori, Yanti, and Rahmawati 2023). Therefore, mindfulness functions not only as a relaxation technique but also as a

strategy for cognitive and affective regulation.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of mindfulness in reducing stress, alleviating anxiety, and enhancing students' psychological well-being (Shapiro, S. L., Oman, D., Thoresen, C. E., Plante, T. G., Flinders 2008). Nevertheless, most of these studies have primarily focused on general mental well-being, while research that explicitly links mindfulness to speaking anxiety in foreign language learning particularly in Arabic remains limited (Herwanto and Hatmo 2021). In addition, research on speaking anxiety has been conducted more extensively in the context of English language learning than in Arabic language learning (J.-M. Dewaele and Al-Saraj 2013).

Based on this research gap, the present study offers novelty by examining the effect of the Mindfulness Training method in reducing Arabic speaking anxiety among students at MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau, Malang, through a simultaneous analysis of physiological, cognitive, and affective aspects. Unlike previous studies that have primarily focused on mindfulness

in relation to emotional regulation or general well-being, this study specifically addresses speaking anxiety in Arabic language learning. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the effect of Mindfulness Training on the reduction of students' Arabic speaking anxiety across physiological, cognitive, and affective dimensions, as well as to identify which aspect of anxiety is most influenced by the implementation of this method. Thus, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Arabic language learning research grounded in educational psychology, while also offering practical implications in the form of more humanistic and adaptive instructional strategies for Arabic language teachers.

## **B. Methods**

This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental design in the form of a one-group pretest–posttest model (Payadnya and Jayantika 2018). A quantitative approach was selected because the research data consisted of numerical scores that were statistically analyzed to measure the effect of the treatment on the variables under investigation (Muhajir 2017).

This design was adopted because the study involved only a single group without a control group, making randomization of subjects unfeasible (Sugiono 2013).

The research participants were 58 eighth-grade students of MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau, Malang. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, based on considerations of homogeneity in Arabic language proficiency (Hardani et al. 2020), the feasibility of implementing the intervention, and official permission from the school. All participants served as the experimental group and were assessed before and after the intervention (Syahrizal and Jailani 2023).

The treatment consisted of Mindfulness Training conducted over six sessions and facilitated directly by the researcher. The training was integrated into the instructional process of Arabic speaking skills. To measure the level of speaking anxiety, a questionnaire was employed, developed based on the concept of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) and adapted to the context of Arabic language learning. The questionnaire

covered three dimensions of anxiety: physiological, cognitive, and affective and used a 1–10 (Numeric Rating Scale) to enhance the sensitivity of measuring changes in scores (Suharsimi Arikunto 2014).

Data collection was conducted twice, namely before the treatment (pretest) and after the treatment (posttest). In addition to the questionnaire, documentation was used as supporting data to verify the implementation of the intervention, including attendance lists, lesson plans, and activity records (Nasution 2009).

Instrument validity was examined through content validity and construct validity using product moment correlation with the assistance of SPSS software. Instrument reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a criterion of  $\alpha \geq 0.60$  indicating acceptable reliability (Sugiono 2017). Data analysis began with the Shapiro–Wilk normality test applied to the differences between pretest and posttest scores. If the data were normally distributed, a paired sample t-test was conducted; otherwise, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was employed as a non-parametric

alternative. In addition, gain score comparisons were performed to determine which anxiety aspect physiological, cognitive, or affective experienced the most substantial reduction following the implementation of Mindfulness Training (Abdussamad 2021).

## **C. Results And Discussion**

### **Results**

This study presents the results of an empirical examination of the effect of *Mindfulness Training* on Arabic speaking anxiety among eighth-grade students at MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau, Malang. Measurements were conducted using an anxiety scale instrument comprising three aspects: physiological (items 1–10), cognitive (items 11–20), and affective (items 21–30). Data were collected through pretest and posttest assessments following the Mindfulness Training intervention, which was implemented over six sessions with the researcher serving as the facilitator.

### **The Effect of Mindfulness Training on the Physiological Aspect**

Descriptive analysis of the physiological aspect of speaking anxiety revealed differences in scores before and after the intervention. A summary of the descriptive statistics is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Physiological Aspects**

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Pretest</b>	<b>Posttest</b>
N	58	58
Mean	68.59	60.10
Std. Deviation	7.29	7.98
Minimum	50	42
Maximum	86	79

The results presented in Table 1 indicate a reduction in the mean score of 8.48 points following the implementation of Mindfulness Training. To assess the appropriateness of parametric analysis, a Shapiro–Wilk normality test was conducted, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Tests of Normality for the Physiological Aspect**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Fisio_Pre	0.982	0.782
Fisio_Post	0.994	0.994

A significance value greater than 0.05 indicates that the data are normally distributed. Therefore, a paired sample t-test was conducted to examine the difference between pretest and posttest scores, with the results presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Paired Samples Test for the Physiological Aspect**

Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
8.48	21.18	57	0.000

### The Effect of Mindfulness Training on the Cognitive Aspect

Descriptive analysis of the cognitive aspect of speaking anxiety is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the Cognitive Aspect**

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest
N	58	58
Mean	75.09	65.12
Std. Deviation	7.55	8.59
Minimum	57	47
Maximum	93	81

A mean reduction of 9.97 points was observed. The results of the Shapiro–Wilk normality test are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Tests of Normality for the Cognitive Aspect**

Variable	Statistic	Sig.
Kog_Pre	0.974	0.327
Kog_Post	0.964	0.133

As the data were normally distributed, the analysis was

continued using a paired sample t-test. The results of the test are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Paired Samples Test for the Cognitive Aspect**

Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
9.97	22.69	57	0.000

### The Effect of Mindfulness Training on the Affective Aspect

A summary of the descriptive statistics for the affective aspect is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for the Affective Aspect**

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest
N	58	58
Mean	72.14	64.88
Std. Deviation	7.63	8.15
Minimum	54	45
Maximum	89	82

The results of the Shapiro–Wilk normality test are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. Tests of Normality for the Affective Aspect**

Variable	Statistic	Sig.
Afektif_Pre	0.959	0.100
Afektif_Post	0.957	0.082

The results of the paired sample t-test are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. Paired Samples Test for the Affective Aspect**

Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
7.26	23.82	57	0.000

### Comparison of Anxiety Reduction across the Three Aspects

The comparison of the pretest–posttest score differences ( $\Delta$ ) across the three aspects is presented in Table 10.

**Table 10. Delta Scores (Pre–Post) across the Three Aspects**

Aspect	Mean $\Delta$
Kognitif	9.97
Fisiologis	8.48
Afektif	7.26

To examine differences in the magnitude of reduction across aspects, a Friedman test was conducted, as presented in Table 11.

**Table 11. Friedman Test**

Test	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Friedman	34.52	2	0.000

The follow-up Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test is presented in Table 12.

**Table 12. Pairwise Comparisons (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test)**

Pair	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Fisiologis – Kognitif	-3.22	0.001
Fisiologis – Afektif	-2.48	0.013
Kognitif – Afektif	-4.10	0.000

As additional support, a comparison of effect sizes is presented in Table 13.

**Table 13. Effect Size Comparison**

Aspect	Effect Size
Kognitif	1.23
Fisiologis	1.11
Afektif	0.92



## **Discussion**

### **The Effect of Mindfulness Training on the Physiological Aspect of Speaking Anxiety**

The findings of this study indicate that Mindfulness Training exerts a significant effect in reducing the physiological aspect of Arabic speaking anxiety. The statistically significant decrease in physiological scores suggests that mindfulness practices help students regulate bodily reactions that typically arise when facing speaking situations, such as increased heart rate, muscle tension, trembling voice, and general physical discomfort.

These findings are consistent with mindfulness theory, which emphasizes regulation of the nervous system through awareness of breathing and bodily sensations (body awareness) (Kabat-Zinn 2003a). Practices such as mindful breathing and body scanning enable individuals to recognize stress responses at an early stage, thereby preventing physiological reactions from escalating into excessive anxiety. In the context of Arabic language learning, the reduction of physical symptoms is particularly important, as physiological anxiety often interferes with articulatory fluency and students' willingness to speak.

Empirically, the results of this study align with Kabat-Zinn's foundational work and subsequent research demonstrating that mindfulness-based practices are

effective in reducing physiological activation associated with academic stress (Khoury et al. 2015). Accordingly, Mindfulness Training may be regarded as a relevant approach to assisting students in coping with the performative demands of foreign language learning, particularly Arabic.

### **The Effect of Mindfulness Training on the Cognitive Aspect of Speaking Anxiety**

The cognitive aspect exhibited the greatest reduction compared to the other aspects. This finding indicates that Mindfulness Training is particularly effective in reducing automatic negative thoughts that arise when students are required to speak Arabic, such as fear of making mistakes, concern about others' evaluations, and negative beliefs about one's own abilities.

From a theoretical perspective, mindfulness operates directly on cognitive processes through the mechanism of decentering, which refers to the ability to view thoughts as transient mental events rather than absolute truths (Shapiro, Brown, and Biegel 2007). As awareness of thoughts increases, students become more capable of observing negative cognitions without becoming entangled in them. This mechanism helps explain why the reduction in cognitive anxiety was the most pronounced in this study.

These findings support previous research indicating that

foreign language speaking anxiety primarily originates from cognitive factors, such as fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension (Gregersen and MacIntyre 2014). Consequently, when mindfulness effectively reduces these cognitive distortions, its impact becomes immediately evident in students' increased mental readiness to engage in speaking.

In other words, mindfulness not only helps students become calmer but also reshapes how they interpret errors, evaluation, and the Arabic language learning process itself. This positions mindfulness as a strategic intervention in performance-based foreign language learning.

### **The Effect of Mindfulness Training on the Affective (Emotional) Aspect of Speaking Anxiety**

The results of this study also demonstrate a significant reduction in the affective or emotional aspect of speaking anxiety, although the magnitude of this reduction was lower than that observed in the physiological and cognitive aspects. This decrease reflects an improvement in students' ability to manage negative emotions such as embarrassment, fear, and lack of confidence when speaking in front of the class.

Conceptually, emotional regulation through mindfulness tends to require a relatively longer period compared to cognitive and physiological regulation, as emotions are often linked to past experiences

and deeply established reaction patterns (J. M. Dewaele 2017). Therefore, although the six-session intervention produced a significant effect, changes in the affective aspect were not as pronounced as those observed in the cognitive domain.

Nevertheless, these findings indicate that mindfulness helps students develop an attitude of acceptance toward emerging emotions (Kabat-Zinn 2003b). Rather than avoiding or suppressing feelings of fear and embarrassment, students learn to acknowledge their presence without overreacting. In the long term, this ability has the potential to enhance students' speaking confidence and emotional resilience in Arabic language learning.

### **The Aspect Most Affected by Mindfulness Training**

Comparisons across the three aspects of anxiety indicate that the cognitive aspect was the most affected by Mindfulness Training, followed by the physiological aspect, and then the affective aspect. These findings are supported by the results of the Friedman test, the follow-up Wilcoxon tests, and the comparison of effect sizes.

The dominance of change in the cognitive aspect can be explained through the hierarchical model of anxiety, in which negative thoughts serve as the primary triggers for physiological and emotional responses (Gregersen and MacIntyre 2014). When negative cognitions are

effectively reduced through mindfulness, bodily and emotional responses gradually decrease as well. Thus, changes in the cognitive aspect provide a foundational basis for improvements in the other aspects.

These findings imply that mindfulness interventions in Arabic language learning should emphasize mental awareness exercises, such as recognizing automatic thoughts, cultivating non-judgmental awareness, and focusing on the speaking process rather than outcomes or evaluation (Bishop et al. 2004).

#### **Theoretical and Practical Implications**

Theoretically, this study reinforces the relevance of mindfulness as an approach within educational psychology and foreign language learning, particularly for managing speaking anxiety. Practically, the findings suggest that Arabic language teachers can integrate simple mindfulness exercises into classroom practice to create a psychologically safer learning environment that supports students' confidence and willingness to speak.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Based on the data analysis using SPSS, this study demonstrates that Mindfulness Training has a significant effect in reducing Arabic speaking anxiety among eighth-grade students

at MTs Wahid Hasyim 1 Dau Malang. Reductions were observed across all investigated aspects physiological, cognitive, and affective as evidenced by significant differences between pretest and posttest scores.

For the physiological aspect, the mean anxiety score decreased from 68.59 to 60.10, with a mean difference of 8.48. The paired sample t-test yielded  $t = 21.18$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , indicating that Mindfulness Training was effective in reducing students' physical anxiety responses during speaking. For the cognitive aspect, the mean score decreased from 75.09 to 65.12, with a mean difference of 9.97 and  $t = 22.69$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . These findings indicate that Mindfulness Training had the strongest effect on reducing negative thoughts and excessive worry. Meanwhile, for the affective aspect, the mean anxiety score decreased from 72.14 to 64.88, with a mean difference of 7.26, accompanied by  $t = 23.82$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , demonstrating a significant improvement in students' emotional regulation when speaking.

A comparison of the three aspects using delta scores and the Friedman test ( $\chi^2 = 34.52$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) indicates that the cognitive aspect was the most affected by Mindfulness

Training, followed by the physiological and affective aspects. Thus, this study confirms that Mindfulness Training is an effective approach for reducing Arabic speaking anxiety, with changes in the cognitive aspect serving as the primary contributor underlying reductions in physiological and emotional responses.

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