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Compensation Strategies in *Muhadatsah* Learning: A Case Study of Speaking Anxiety, Self-Confidence, and Motivation among Beginner Arabic Learners

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Abstract

Limited vocabulary and linguistic abilities can hinder spoken Arabic communication and lead to anxiety, low self-confidence, and decreased motivation. This study aims to: (1) describe the implementation of the Oxford compensation strategy in *muhadatsah* learning; (2) identify supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation; and (3) explore its implications for speaking anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and speaking skills of beginning students. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study design involving five second-semester students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at STAIN Mandailing Natal and a *muhadatsah* lecturer as a key informant. Data were collected through online semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The results showed that the compensation strategy was integrated into role-playing, retelling Arabic cartoons, formulating questions based on songs, and describing situations. Its implementation was supported by the curriculum, lecturer creativity, and student ability homogeneity, but was hampered by the habit of asking friends directly and the absence of an Arabic-language environment outside the classroom. Students perceived that the limited use of synonyms, their first language, paraphrases, gestures, facial expressions, and approximate expressions helped maintain communication, reduce anxiety and embarrassment, and increase confidence, motivation, enjoyment, and speaking ability. Theoretically, compensatory strategies function as a communicative-affective buffer that bridges linguistic limitations and psychological barriers in Arabic language learning.

Keywords: compensation strategies; *muhadatsah* learning; speaking anxiety; self-confidence; learning motivation

A. Introduction

Oxford Perspective Compensation Strategy in *Muhadatsah* Learning offers a creative and innovative technique to eliminate language-inhibiting factors and improve Arabic speaking skills. The inhibiting factors of foreign language can be language anxiety, lack of

confidence, and lack of motivation externally so that interest in language becomes reduced. (Putri Ramadhani, Kurnia Ulfa, 2022) Oxford's perspective compensation strategy is among the strategies used by teachers in *muhadatsah* learning as a form of external motivation for students. In the application of compensation strategies, students are encouraged to continue to speak productively and comprehensively (Bambang Purwanto, 2022) with various techniques, so that the reason students are unable to speak can be overcome, and the ability to *bermuhadatsah* can increase.

The compensation strategy is a language learning strategy which, according to Rebecca L. Oxford, is part of a direct strategy which means directly addressing oral language expression. (Sariyati, 2021). In the compensation strategy, students are encouraged to continue speaking even if they do not know the vocabulary anymore. Techniques in this strategy include students being allowed to borrow vocabulary from their mother tongue, for example Indonesian, which is similar in meaning (Setiawati & Septiyaningtyas, 2023) If the student really does not know the vocabulary of a foreign language, such as Arabic. This is done so that students do not stop speaking or feel hopeless just because they do not know one or a few words.

The direct strategy used in *muhadatsah* learning is the right strategy. This is seen from the characteristics of *muhadatsah* learning which is learning in the form of direct practice. The practice of *muhadatsah* directly through various techniques that train students. (Lensun & Rorong, 2022) to express their ideas orally continuously. The mistake that often occurs in language teachers who teach speaking skills is the lack of direct practice of *bermuhadatsah*.

Learning Arabic as a foreign language includes learning language elements and *maharah lughawiyyah*. Language elements consist of *mufradat*, *qawa'id*, and *aswat*. Language elements become a tool of knowledge (Asep Sunarko, Faizatul Azizah, Manasika Salsabila, Ida Rohyani, Ida Alinda Fatonah, Nadiyahatulhaq Adz-Dzakiyah, 2024) to master *maharah lughawiyyah*. The *qawa'id* material learned is integrated into the language skills material in an applicative manner called *an-nahwu at-thatbi'iy*. *Qawa'id* material that is not integrated into *maharah lughawiyyah* will not develop in the realm of science. Hierarchically, *maharah lughawiyyah* is learned in order, namely *maharah istima'*, *maharah al-kalaam*, *maharah qiraah* and *maharah kitabah*. This sequence of learning *maharah lughawiyyah* will help students master Arabic completely and perfectly. (SADAT, 2018).

Arabic language learning for non-Arabs such as students in Indonesia is not learning that is practically easy in the field. Learning in the aspect of *qawa'id* is made the most important aspect to be mastered early for the purpose of reading bare books in salafiyah

Islamic boarding schools. (Amin et al., 2022)(Ghoni, 2023) creates a difficult impression of the Arabic language itself. In fact, every Muslim has indirectly practiced Arabic in their daily worship activities (Erlina et al., 2022). If awareness of speaking Arabic through *muhadatsah* is made a habit then the assumption of difficulty will be avoided. In addition, it is also supported by the existence of an Arabic-speaking environment in language learning itself (Afifuddin, 2021).

Muhadatsah is one of the compulsory courses in universities, especially in Arabic language study programs to master *mahaarah al-kalaam*. The characteristics of *muhadatsah* courses such as learning *mahaarah al-kalaam* in general are to train students' speaking skills ranging from the ability to sound letters, words, phrases, and sentences to the ability to tell stories and even debate in Arabic. Based on the results of interviews with lecturers of *muhadatsah* courses in the Arabic Language Education Study Program of STAIN Mandailing Natal (PBA STAIN Madina Study Program) there is a unique strategy used. This strategy is in the form of a compensation strategy that can improve the speaking skills of students with a background in salafiyah Islamic boarding schools who have not prioritized *mahaarah al-kalaam*.

Limited vocabulary may interrupt communication and increase learners' fear of making mistakes and receiving negative evaluations, which can intensify speaking anxiety, weaken self-confidence, and reduce motivation to speak (Alfian et al., 2022)(Uno, 2018). Compensation strategies allow learners to maintain communication through synonyms, circumlocution, selected first-language words, gestures, and approximate expressions (Oxford, 1990). Thus, these strategies may interrupt the psychological chain by reducing speaking pressure, creating a sense of communicative success, and sustaining learners' confidence and motivation.

Previous studies have examined compensation strategies either as part of Oxford's broader classification of language learning strategies, including memory, cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies, or as techniques for supporting learners' speaking performance (Setiawati & Septiyaningtyas, 2023) (Sariyati, 2021)(Budiarti, 2020) Other studies have focused on Arabic learning strategies for elementary-level learners (Fatihah, 2023), (Isbah et al., 2022), (Rozi & Syahna, 2023) (Tasya, 2021). These studies provide important evidence that compensation strategies help learners maintain communication despite limited linguistic knowledge. However, they have largely emphasized the use of compensation strategies and their contribution to speaking performance, without sufficiently explaining their relationship with psychological barriers in foreign-language speaking.

In particular, limited research has explored how compensation strategies are related to speaking anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation in Arabic *muhadatsah* learning. This issue is important because learners' inability to recall vocabulary or construct accurate expressions may interrupt communication and trigger fear of making mistakes, embarrassment, and reluctance to speak. Compensation techniques, such as using synonyms, gestures, facial expressions, circumlocution, and selected first-language words, may not only bridge linguistic limitations but also provide psychological support that enables learners to continue speaking. Nevertheless, the communicative and affective functions of these strategies have rarely been examined together, particularly among beginner university students with a salafiyah Islamic boarding school background whose previous Arabic learning has predominantly emphasized grammar and reading skills rather than oral communication.

Therefore, this study addresses this research gap by qualitatively examining the implementation of Oxford's compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning, the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting their implementation, and their perceived implications for students' speaking anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and Arabic speaking skills. By focusing on beginner learners in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at STAIN Mandailing Natal, this study seeks to explain how compensation strategies function not only as linguistic tools for overcoming limited vocabulary but also as communicative and psychological support in Arabic speaking activities.

Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) describe the implementation of Oxford's compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning; (2) identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting their implementation; and (3) explore their perceived implications for students' speaking anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and Arabic speaking skills. This study argues that compensation strategies may function not only as linguistic tools for overcoming communication gaps but also as communicative and psychological support for beginner Arabic learners.

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine the implementation of Oxford's compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning at the Arabic Language Education Study Program of STAIN Mandailing Natal. According to Creswell (2016), qualitative case study research enables researchers to explore an issue or problem experienced by participants within its actual setting and to obtain an in-depth understanding of the case being investigated. The study involved five student participants and one *muhadatsah* lecturer as a key informant. The students were selected purposively because they had directly experienced *muhadatsah*

learning using compensation strategies and were categorized as beginner-level Arabic speakers. Most of them were graduates of salafiyah Islamic boarding schools, where Arabic learning predominantly emphasized qawa'id and the reading of classical Islamic texts rather than oral communication.

Speaking anxiety, self-confidence, and learning motivation were employed as the main psychological dimensions of analysis rather than as quantitatively measured variables. Speaking anxiety referred to students' tension, fear, embarrassment, hesitation, and concern about making linguistic errors or receiving negative evaluations when speaking Arabi (Alfian et al., 2022). Self-confidence referred to students' belief in their ability to initiate and maintain communication despite limited vocabulary and possible linguistic errors, as reflected in their willingness to speak, use alternative expressions, and continue communicating. Learning motivation referred to the internal and external encouragement that stimulated students to participate, persist, practise, and enjoy Arabic speaking activities (Uno, 2018). These dimensions were examined in relation to compensation techniques, including the use of synonyms, selected first-language words, circumlocution, gestures, facial expressions, approximate expressions, and newly created expressions to maintain communication.

Data were collected through an online semi-structured interview with the *muhadatsah* lecturer via WhatsApp and open-ended questionnaires administered to the five students through Google Forms. The interview explored the rationale, procedures, techniques, supporting and inhibiting factors, and observed implications of compensation strategies, whereas the questionnaires examined students' experiences of anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, enjoyment, and perceived development of Arabic speaking skills. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The data were coded and organized into themes related to strategy implementation, supporting and inhibiting factors, speaking anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, enjoyment, and speaking-skill development. The lecturer's explanations were then compared with the students' responses to identify recurring patterns and interpret the communicative and psychological functions of compensation strategies.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Implementation of Oxford Compensation Strategy in *Muhadatsah* Learning in PBA Study Program of STAIN Madina

The implementation of the Oxford Compensation Strategy in *Muhadatsah* Learning in PBA Study Program of STAIN Madina can be seen from the figure below:

Figure 1: Integration of Compensation Strategies with Other Strategies in *Muhadatsah*

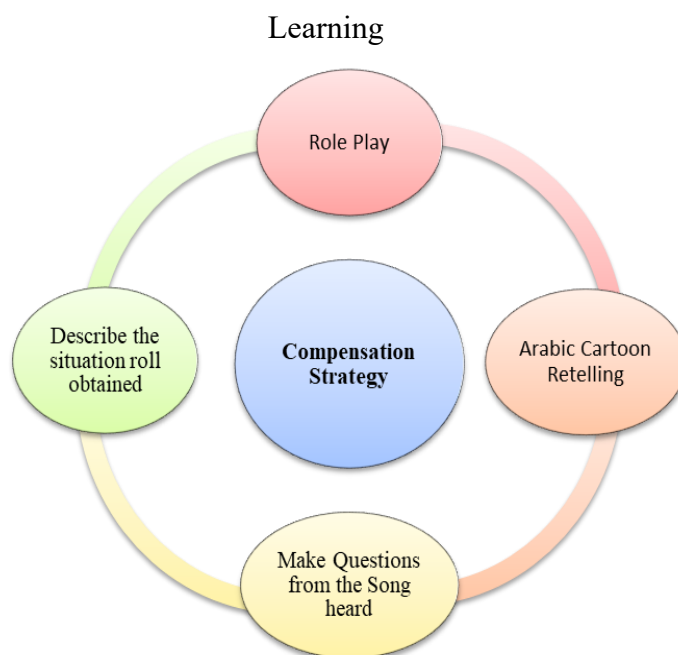


Figure 1 above shows the integration of compensation strategies to four other strategies used in muhadatsah learning in PBA STAIN Madina second semester, namely role-playing strategies, retelling Arabic cartoons, making questions from songs heard, and describing the situation scrolls obtained. *Muhadatsah* lecturers use these four strategies by emphasizing the use of compensation strategies in all strategies used. This is done because of the importance of compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning to help limited language skills, namely *mahaarah al kalam*.(Rozi & Syahna, 2023). Compensation strategies are chosen by lecturers to meet the needs of students whose level of *mahaarah al-kalaam* ability is still low. This is in accordance with the task of educators in analyzing the needs of students and choosing the right strategy to use in learning. (Sarnoto, 2024).

At the beginning of the course, the lecturer conducted an initial needs analysis by asking students about their previous educational backgrounds and engaging them in a brief Arabic conversation. The students were asked several questions in Arabic and encouraged to respond using their available linguistic resources. The lecturer's initial assessment indicated that most students were still at a beginner level of Arabic speaking proficiency, as reflected in their limited vocabulary, frequent hesitation, and difficulty maintaining oral communication. Based on these findings, the lecturer selected compensation strategies to help students continue speaking despite their linguistic limitations. Conducting a needs analysis before selecting an instructional strategy is essential because it enables lecturers to identify students' prior knowledge, abilities, and learning difficulties and to choose strategies that are appropriate to their needs.(Rozi & Syahna, 2023).

The compensation strategy was selected because the students were identified as beginner-level learners in Arabic speaking. Most of them had graduated from salafiyah

Islamic boarding schools, where Arabic instruction generally emphasized grammatical knowledge and the reading of classical Islamic texts rather than oral communication. (Tolinggi, 2020)(Syarifah & Juriana, 2020)(Kasim et al., 2023). Consequently, the students demonstrated limited vocabulary, frequent hesitation, and difficulty maintaining spoken interaction. As a direct language-learning strategy, compensation strategies were considered appropriate because they enable learners to continue communicating by using alternative linguistic and nonlinguistic resources when they encounter difficulties in expressing ideas in Arabic.

Compensatory strategies are very suitable for teaching Arabic speaking proficiency. (Afyuddin et al., 2022). In its learning syntax which is integrated with other strategies in *muhadatsah* learning, the compensation strategy has various techniques, namely; 1) using mother tongue *mufradat* when students do not know Arabic *mufradat*, 2) using synonyms of unknown Arabic *mufradat*, 3) using sign language for unknown *mufaradat*, 4) using explanations of the meaning of unknown *mufradat* with expressions that lead to the meaning (Sarnoto, 2024), 5) creating certain words whose meaning leads to the meaning of unknown Arabic *mufradat*, 6) using body movements and facial expressions for unknown Arabic expressions or *mufradat*.

In the implementation of role-playing strategies, *muhadatsah* lecturers emphasize the integration of compensation strategies to strengthen and support the achievement of *muhadatsah* learning objectives. The role-playing strategy will not be implemented properly without a compensation strategy as a solution to students' inability to speak Arabic. Whatever role is played will not be successful without sufficient language skills, while the language skills of these students are clearly categorized as lacking. In playing the role of PBA STAIN Madina students use their mother tongue to express the Arabic *mufradat* that they do not know.

In the implementation of the storytelling activity, students were asked to retell Arabic cartoons that they had previously watched. Because their vocabulary was still limited, they used compensation techniques such as gestures, facial expressions, circumlocution, and alternative expressions to convey meanings that they could not express using the exact Arabic words. These techniques allowed the students to maintain their speech and communicate the main ideas of the cartoons despite their linguistic limitations. This finding is consistent with the communicative function of compensation strategies, which enable learners to continue speaking when they encounter gaps in their vocabulary knowledge (Rohayati, 2019) in speaking Arabic despite experiencing obstacles in the form of a lack of *mufradat* when speaking.

In expressing questions from the Arabic song he heard, this second semester PBA STAIN Madina student also used compensation strategies in the form of explanations with other Arabic expressions for unknown *mufradat*. Arabic is a language rich in vocabulary and expressions. Mastery of one *mufradat* and expression makes it possible not to master other *mufradat* and expressions, especially for the beginner level in *bermuhadatsah*. In answering questions posed by classmates, they also sometimes make intelligent guesses about the meaning of *mufradat* that are not yet known with certainty so that the process of *bermuhadatsah* continues. This intelligent guessing intends to lead to the meaning of the unknown *mufradat* so that it can be the subject of class discussion. However, in the application of this smart guessing technique, there are shortcomings in the form of student errors in guessing the meaning of *mufradat* due to a lack of vocabulary. (Sarnoto, 2024). Based on this, it can be said that the intelligent guessing technique is not suitable for students who do not master *mufradat*. This is a shortcoming of the compensation strategy if applied to the beginner level.

In the activity of describing a situation written on a randomly selected paper, students were required to respond spontaneously in Arabic. When they could not recall particular vocabulary, they used to select first-language words, gestures, facial expressions, and approximate expressions to communicate the intended meaning. These nonverbal and alternative linguistic resources helped them continue speaking without prolonged pauses. The ability to maintain communication also appeared to reduce their fear of failure and support their confidence in participating in oral activities (KİNEŞ, 2021) and facial expressions students continue speaking without stopping due to a lack of vocabulary. This can also increase students' confidence due to tolerance of their shortcomings. The tolerance given in the form of compensation strategies eliminates students' pessimism in speaking. When pessimism disappears, motivation and learning outcomes will increase (Fitriyani et al., 2020)(Mulya & Lengkana, 2020).

So it can be concluded that the implementation of compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning in the PBA STAIN Madina Study Program is strongly integrated into all strategies used. Compensation strategies play a direct role in the difficulties and inabilities of students to communicate in Arabic with various techniques. Broadly speaking, the compensation strategy technique is in accordance with the characteristics of PBA STAIN Madina students except for the technique of intelligent guessing the meaning of *mufradat* which is not appropriate. Then the other four strategies as described above are tactics that play an indirect role in overcoming the difficulties and obstacles of speaking Arabic.

2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Oxford Compensation

Strategy in Muhadatsah Learning in PBA Study Program of STAIN Madina

Table. 1 Overview of Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

No	Supporting Factors	No	Inhibiting Factors
1	Supportive curriculum	1	Students' spontaneous habit of asking their friends
2	Innovative and creative lecturers	2	The absence of bi'ah 'Arabiyah outside the classroom
3	Homogeneous student abilities		

Table 1 above shows the existence of supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of Oxford's compensation strategy in *muhadatsah* learning in PBA STAIN Madina Study Program. Supporting factors include the existence of a supportive curriculum in the form of *muhadatsah* courses as a continuous course, namely *muhadatsah* 1, *muhadatsah* 2, and *muhadatsah* 3. The existence of innovative and creative lecturers providing motivation to improve Arabic speaking skills is something special for these PBA students. The provision of extrinsic motivation from a lecturer is a supporter of intrinsic motivation from within students. This extrinsic motivation is in the form of encouragement from outside oneself (Uno, 2018) students including motivation provided by lecturers. Giving motivation is very urgent in learning because the learning process will not go well if there is no motivation to learn (Susanti, 2020).

The homogeneous ability of students supports the implementation of compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning. This makes it easier for lecturers to equalize materials and strategies. Homogeneous ability causes students to be more confident in using compensation techniques to overcome difficulties in speaking Arabic due to the lack of *mufradat* mastered. With the homogeneity of students' *mahaarah al-kalaam* ability, it will eliminate language anxiety which is an obstacle in learning. Language anxiety sometimes arises from social fears in the form of judgment from others (Thasya & Mufidah, 2022) whose ability exceeds his.

The inhibiting factor in the implementation of compensation strategies is the habit of students asking spontaneously to their friends when they do not know Arabic *mufradat*. This habit reduces the effectiveness of compensation strategies as a solution to students' difficulties in *mahaarah al-kalaam*. However, this habit often occurs at the beginning of the meeting, for the next meeting students are accustomed to using their mother tongue, synonyms, gestures, facial expressions, and expressions as an explanation of the meaning of unknown *mufradat* and creating new words as a lead to understanding the meaning of the unknown *mufradat*.

In addition, the inhibiting factor also comes from the absence of *bi'ah Arabiyah* outside of *muhadatsah* class. Compensation strategies and *bi'ah 'Arabiyah* are two things that support each other and strengthen the improvement of the ability of *mahaarah al-kalaam* students who are still at this beginner level. *Bi'ah 'Arabiyah* is a method that plays a very

important role in improving and maintaining one's *mahaarah al-kalaam* ability (Martina & Fauji, 2024) (Ikramullah, 2020) because of the *mumarasah* system to facilitate, improve and maintain *mahaarah al-kalaam*.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning in the PBA STAIN Madina Study Program come from internal and external students. Internal supporting factors are homogeneous student abilities. The supporting factors externally in the form of students are innovative and creative lecturers in providing extrinsic motivation and curriculum support for the PBA STAIN Madina study program. Internal inhibiting factors are spontaneous habits of students at the beginning of learning to ask their friends when they do not know Arabic *mufradat*. While external factors are the absence of bi'ah 'Arabiyah outside the *muhadatsah* class.

3. Implications of the Application of Compensation Strategies in Muhadatsah Learning

The implications of compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning were identified through the lecturer's online semi-structured interview and the open-ended questionnaire responses of five students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at STAIN Mandailing Natal. The lecturer reported that the strategies helped students maintain oral communication despite their limited vocabulary and beginner-level speaking proficiency. Similarly, the students' responses collected through Google Forms indicated perceived changes in their speaking anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, enjoyment, and Arabic speaking ability. The detailed findings are presented in the following table: Students' Perceived Psychological and Speaking Changes

No	Analytical Dimension	Interview Result				
		Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5
1	Anxiety & shyness in speaking slowly disappear	Anxiety & shyness are still present but slight	Anxiety & shyness slowly disappears	Anxiety & shyness slowly disappeared	Anxiety & embarrassment slowly disappeared because they were not shamed in front of the class but directed	Anxiety & shyness have disappeared
2	Self-confidence in speaking increased	Improved and adequate	Increased	Improved from the previous school	Improved and there is a sense of pride	Increased
3	Started to be motivated to practice <i>mahaarah al-kalaam</i>	Yes because of the support from the lecturer to continue speaking even if it is wrong	Yes because of the support of <i>mufaradat</i> learned	Yes because of the support of lecturers and friends in learning	Yes because I want to be fluent in Arabic	Yes
4	The ability of	Clearly	Yes,	Yes,	Increasing little	Yes,

	mahaarah al-kalaam is more improved	improved	increased	improved	by little	improved
5	Enjoyed speaking Arabic more	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The results of students' open-ended questionnaire responses with five students showed that their shyness and anxiety began to disappear after following the compensation strategy in learning *muhadatsah*. Students 1, 2, and 3 admitted that their shyness and anxiety in speaking Arabic had disappeared slowly. Even student 4 confirmed that the anxiety and shyness in speaking Arabic disappeared because they were not humiliated in front of the class. If students are reprimanded and humiliated in front of the class when they are unable and make language mistakes, their mental and psychological state will be disturbed. This psychological state can be in the form of language anxiety, no longer interested in speaking, lack of confidence, and other consequences (Alfian et al., 2022). Then student 5 admitted that his shyness and anxiety immediately disappeared by using this compensation strategy.

All students admitted that there was an increase in confidence in speaking Arabic after learning *muhadatsah* with compensation strategies. One of the reasons why someone is not confident in speaking a foreign language is the lack of vocabulary. Compensation strategies provide relief to beginner-level learners by allowing them to use their mother tongue, synonyms of words, expressions that clarify meaning, gestures, sign language, facial expressions, and creating new words to explain Arabic *mufradat* that they have not mastered. Although all of these compensation techniques do not represent the meaning of difficult unknown vocabulary perfectly and precisely, at least the *bermuhadatsah* activity continues without pause. If there is a pause or stop in *bermudadatsah* then this is what triggers a person's reluctance to speak Arabic. It is different if the *muhadatsah* process continues even though it is not perfect, it will continue to encourage students to keep trying, then slowly make improvements to aspects of language errors.

After students' self-confidence increased, all students also admitted that they began to be motivated to speak Arabic. Apart from the compensation strategy implemented, this motivation is also influenced by extrinsic motivation originating from lecturers, colleagues, and motivation in the form of an Arabic language learning orientation. Student 1 admitted that the increase in *mahaarah al-kalaam* motivation was due to the lecturer's support to keep trying even though they were wrong. This is in accordance with the compensation strategy technique which provides language relief even though it is not quite as expected. This technique means students are allowed to create new words that match the meaning of words whose meaning is unknown. This is one of the shortcomings of this compensation strategy,

but for beginner-level *muhadatsah* learning it is not a big problem because the aim of this strategy is to increase students' desire and self-confidence to be productive and comprehensive in speaking Arabic. Regarding errors in the use of vocabulary or *nahwu* usage, they can be corrected slowly at the next level.

The abilities of all students increased after the previous foreign language psychological factors were in the positive zone. These psychological factors in the form of anxiety and embarrassment disappear, self-confidence increases, and motivation increases. This is in accordance with previous research, namely that if feelings of shame and anxiety disappear, self-confidence and motivation increase. In the end, all of this has a positive effect on learning abilities and outcomes (Mulya & Lengkana, 2020) (Ambarwati et al., 2021). In the end, all students felt happy speaking Arabic after participating in *muhadatsah* learning with compensation strategies.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the implications of implementing compensation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning have positive implications. The positive implications of *mahaarah al-kalaam* are in the form of; 1) gradual disappearance of feelings of shame and anxiety, 2) increased self-confidence, 3) increased motivation to learn, 4) increased ability, and 5) a feeling of enjoyment in speaking Arabic. In the aspect of increasing *mahaarah al-kalaam* motivation, the compensation strategy factor does not stand alone but is strengthened by extrinsic motivation strategies in *muhadatsah* learning, both from lecturers and peers.

Taken together, these findings indicate that compensation strategies perform two interconnected functions in beginner Arabic speaking learning. First, they provide communicative support by enabling learners to maintain interaction despite limited vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. Second, they provide affective support by reducing speaking pressure, creating a sense of communicative success, strengthening self-confidence, and sustaining motivation. This dual function may be conceptualized as communicative-affective scaffolding, through which compensation strategies bridge learners' linguistic limitations and psychological barriers in *muhadatsah* learning.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that compensation strategies integrated into *muhadatsah* activities help beginner learners maintain oral communication despite limited vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. Techniques such as synonyms, selected first-language words, circumlocution, gestures, facial expressions, and approximate expressions were perceived to reduce speaking anxiety and embarrassment, strengthen self-confidence, increase motivation, and foster

enjoyment in Arabic speaking. The theoretical contribution of this study is the extension of Oxford's compensation strategies from communicative repair to communicative-affective scaffolding, in which compensation strategies bridge linguistic limitations and psychological barriers by sustaining communication while supporting anxiety reduction, confidence, and motivation. These findings are particularly relevant to students with salafiyah Islamic boarding school backgrounds whose previous Arabic learning emphasized grammar and reading rather than oral communication. However, because this study used a qualitative case study with a small number of participants and relied on participants' perceptions, further experimental or mixed-method research using larger samples and validated instruments is needed.

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