

ISLAMIC VALUE INTEGRATION IN EFL SPEAKING CLASSES: A LEARNING DESIGN FOR A PROJECT-BASED LEARNING MODEL

*INTEGRAÇÃO DE VALORES ISLÂMICOS EM AULAS DE CONVERSAÇÃO EM
INGLÊS COMO LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA: UM DESIGN DE APRENDIZAGEM PARA
UM MODELO DE APRENDIZAGEM BASEADO EM PROJETOS*

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Abstract

This study addresses the dual challenge of linguistic barriers (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) and psychological obstacles (low confidence, fear of mistakes) faced by EFL learners in Islamic higher education. It aims to design an innovative English speaking instruction model integrating Project-Based Learning (PjBL) with Islamic moral values, bridging pedagogical and spiritual learning gaps. A mixed-methods approach was employed with 47 students from three Islamic universities in East Java. Data collection combined closed-ended questionnaires (quantitative) and semi-structured interviews (qualitative), analyzed via descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The study evaluated student perceptions of PjBL and Islamic value integration to develop a preliminary instructional model. Results showed: (1) 89% student awareness of speaking skills' importance, (2) 82% preference for contextual, collaborative learning, and (3) statistically significant acceptance ($p < 0.05$) only for Islamic value integration through thematic content. The proposed model operationalizes four values—Fathanah (wisdom), Amanah (trustworthiness), Shiddiq (truthfulness), and Tabligh (conveying truth)—across PjBL stages. While the model holistically addresses linguistic, affective, and

Resumo

Este estudo aborda o duplo desafio das barreiras linguísticas (gramática, vocabulário, pronúncia) e dos obstáculos psicológicos (baixa confiança, medo de erros) enfrentados por alunos de inglês como língua estrangeira (EFL) no ensino superior islâmico. O objetivo é desenvolver um modelo inovador de ensino de inglês falado, integrando a Aprendizagem Baseada em Projetos (PjBL) com os valores morais islâmicos, eliminando as lacunas de aprendizagem pedagógica e espiritual. Uma abordagem de métodos mistos foi empregada com 47 alunos de três universidades islâmicas em Java Oriental. A coleta de dados combinou questionários fechados (quantitativos) e entrevistas semiestruturadas (qualitativas), analisados por meio de estatística descritiva e análise temática. O estudo avaliou as percepções dos alunos sobre a PjBL e a integração dos valores islâmicos para desenvolver um modelo preliminar de ensino. Os resultados mostraram: (1) 89% de conscientização dos alunos sobre a importância das habilidades de conversação, (2) 82% de preferência pela aprendizagem contextual e colaborativa e (3) aceitação estatisticamente significativa ($p < 0,05$) apenas para a integração dos valores islâmicos por meio de conteúdo temático. O modelo proposto



moral needs, findings are context-bound to Islamic universities in East Java. Generalizability requires validation across diverse Muslim-majority educational settings. This study pioneers a dual-focused framework enhancing both speaking proficiency and Islamic character development. It offers educators a culturally responsive pedagogical tool, aligning 21st-century skills with spiritual values. Future research should test the model's efficacy through longitudinal classroom implementation.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning. Islamic Values. EFL Speaking Skills. Moral Education.

operacionaliza quatro valores — Fathanah (sabedoria), Amanah (confiabilidade), Shiddiq (veracidade) e Tabligh (transmitir a verdade) — em todos os estágios do PjBL. Embora o modelo aborde holisticamente as necessidades linguísticas, afetivas e morais, os resultados são contextualizados em universidades islâmicas em Java Oriental. A generalização requer validação em diversos ambientes educacionais de maioria muçulmana. Este estudo é pioneiro em uma estrutura de foco duplo que aprimora tanto a proficiência oral quanto o desenvolvimento do caráter islâmico. Ele oferece aos educadores uma ferramenta pedagógica culturalmente responsiva, alinhando habilidades do século XXI com valores espirituais. Pesquisas futuras devem testar a eficácia do modelo por meio da implementação longitudinal em sala de aula.

Palavras-chave: Aprendizagem Baseada em Projetos. Valores Islâmicos. Habilidades de Conversação em Inglês como Língua Estrangeira. Educação Moral.

1 INTRODUCTION

Speaking serves as a pivotal mechanism through which individuals communicate and engage in academic and professional settings. In academic contexts, the ability to articulate thoughts clearly and effectively is essential for students to meaningfully participate in classroom discussions, deliver presentations, and collaborate on projects activities that directly influence their academic performance and learning outcomes (Heron et al., 2024; Leonita et al., 2023). Likewise, in professional settings, speaking skills are indispensable for effective team communication, client interactions, and formal presentations, with significant implications for career development and workplace dynamics (Meilasari et al., 2023). In this sense, speaking is not merely a language skill but a foundational competence for success across contexts.

Despite its critical role, the development of speaking skills among EFL learners particularly in Islamic higher education institutions (PTKI) remains a persistent challenge. From a linguistic standpoint, students struggle with fluency and the application of functional language roles such as initiating, responding, and elaborating ideas in interaction (Menggo et al., 2019). Psychologically, many students experience high levels of anxiety, low self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes, which further inhibit their

performance (Hermagustiana et al., 2021; Meilasari et al., 2023). These difficulties are exacerbated by rigid classroom environments and teacher-centered approaches that fail to foster autonomy or create space for meaningful interaction. In response, recent research highlights the efficacy of student-centered approaches such as task-based learning and digital integration to improve both linguistic competence and learner confidence (Dheressa et al., 2024; Widiastuti et al., 2022). Technology-enhanced materials, including WhatsApp-based platforms, have proven effective in increasing students' motivation and speaking fluency (Maulina et al., 2023).

However, the challenges faced by students in PTKI are not only technical and psychological, but also pedagogical and value-driven. As institutions that aim to integrate Islamic character education within academic instruction, PTKIs are expected to develop not only communicative competence but also moral and spiritual dimensions of language use. This creates a pressing need for a speaking model that is both linguistically effective and value-oriented, addressing the full spectrum of learner needs. Specifically, such a model should reflect Islamic moral values such *Fathanah* (wisdom), *Amanah* (trustworthiness), *Shiddiq* (truthfulness), and *Tabligh* (conveying truth) as foundational elements of both character and communication. While various strategies have been proposed to improve speaking instruction, there remains a gap in models that simultaneously respond to linguistic, psychological, and Islamic pedagogical demands. This research seeks to address that gap by analyzing the needs of students in PTKI and proposing a model of speaking instruction that is contextually relevant, pedagogically sound, and morally grounded.

Although speaking is a key skill in academic and professional contexts (Heron et al., 2024; Meilasari et al., 2023), many students at Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) still face difficulties in developing this competence. Linguistic barriers such as limitations in fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary (Manorom et al., 2024; Wulandari et al., 2021), as well as psychological barriers in the form of anxiety, low self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes (Octaberlina et al., 2022; Yessenbekova, 2024), are the dominant factors hindering students' speaking performance. In addition, speaking learning at PTKI has not been systematically designed to integrate Islamic values such as *Fathanah*, *Amanah*, *Shiddiq*, and *Tabligh* (FAST), although these values are essential in forming Islamic character (Triana et al., 2023). The absence of a learning model that can bridge linguistic, affective, and spiritual aspects is the core problem of this research.

Theoretically, this research makes an important contribution to the development of a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model that is not only oriented towards language skill mastery but also towards the internalization of Islamic values (Puspitasari & Yuliana, 2022). By integrating academic and character dimensions, this research expands the framework of Islamic pedagogy in the context of English language learning in PTKI. Practically, the designed model can be an alternative solution that is more contextual, participatory, and value-laden, and relevant to current student needs. These findings also have the potential to support educators in creating a more reflective, productive speaking class atmosphere and promoting the formation of Islamic identity through active communication processes (Menggo et al., 2023; Triana et al., 2023).

This research aims to design an initial model for learning English speaking skills that is relevant to the context and needs of students in Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI). The first objective is to analyze students' needs in speaking learning, both from the linguistic aspects such as fluency, vocabulary, and sentence structure, as well as psychological barriers such as anxiety and lack of self-confidence. The second objective is to identify students' perceptions and preferences regarding the application of Project-Based Learning and the integration of Islamic values in the speaking learning process. The third objective is to design a PjBL-based speaking learning model integrated with FAST (Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh) values, as an effort to develop a learning approach that not only improves language competence but also builds students' Islamic character in a contextual and applicable manner.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Speaking in efl classrooms: a review of current issues and trends

Research on speaking difficulties in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning consistently highlights major challenges in aspects of speaking fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary mastery (Manorom et al., 2024; Wulandari et al., 2021). These barriers are complex and interrelated, hindering students from expressing ideas smoothly and accurately. In addition, classroom dynamics and teacher-student interaction patterns also affect students' comfort and participation in speaking practice (Chang & Windeatt, 2024). Furthermore, psychological factors such as anxiety,

low self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes significantly impact students' speaking performance (Octaberlina et al., 2022; Yessenbekova, 2024). Insensitive oral feedback can even reduce self-efficacy, although it still has the potential to promote improvement (Hartono et al., 2022). Therefore, several studies recommend learning that targets not only linguistic aspects but also pays attention to students' affective aspects and communication strategies comprehensively (Suari, 2022; Wulandari et al., 2021). This comprehensive approach is key to improving speaking ability in the EFL context. Thus, various previous studies have emphasized that improving speaking ability is not sufficient to rely solely on linguistic aspects but must also consider psychological and pedagogical dimensions holistically. These findings are in line with the focus of this research, which aims to design a Project-Based Learning-based speaking learning model that can address linguistic challenges while building students' Islamic character.

2.2 Studies on project-based learning in language education

Numerous studies have shown that Project-Based Learning (PjBL) offers significant benefits in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, both in Indonesia and internationally. PjBL has been proven to enhance students' productive skills, critical thinking, and language competence (Artini et al., 2018; Song et al., 2024). Additionally, this approach greatly contributes to increased motivation, active engagement, and positive attitudes towards language learning (Asfihana et al., 2022). The effectiveness of PjBL is also evident in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), resulting in improved learning outcomes across disciplines (Hidayati et al., 2023). However, teachers still face challenges in its implementation, such as time constraints and student readiness, although they generally welcome this approach (Izzah, 2021).

In the local Indonesian context, the integration of technology and the use of scaffolding in task design have supported the success of PjBL, including improvements in pronunciation skills (Iskandar et al., 2024). On the other hand, Muslim et al. (Muslim et al., 2020) noted that some Indonesian students show low investment in English learning, despite having both integrative and instrumental motivation. PjBL can address these challenges by creating a more dynamic learning environment focused on developing interpersonal communication and authentic learning experiences (Menggo et al., 2023).

These findings provide a strong basis for adopting PjBL as a strategic approach in designing a more relevant, participatory, and meaningful speaking learning model.

2.3 Research on islamic values integration in education

The integration of Islamic values in education, including in the context of English language learning, has become an important focus in the character development of students, particularly in Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI). The FAST values—Fathanah (wisdom), Amanah (trustworthiness), Shiddiq (honesty), and Tabligh (the ability to convey truth)—have been used in general education as a foundation for strengthening student morality, but their application in language teaching remains limited. Triana et al. (Triana et al., 2023) found that the use of Islamic topics increases engagement, but explicit value integration is still at a moderate level. Most studies, such as Putri et al. (Putri et al., 2022), examine the integration of Islamic values in other fields like mathematics, so empirical contributions in the context of foreign language teaching are minimal. In Islamic character education, the incorporation of religious values into the learning process aims not only to provide moral education but also to shape students' Islamic identity in their academic and social lives (Puspitasari & Yuliana, 2022).

Although many studies have discussed Project-Based Learning and Islamic character education separately, there is no model that simultaneously combines speaking skills, the PjBL approach, and Islamic values within a single pedagogical framework. This research aims to fill this gap by designing an initial speaking learning model that not only addresses students' linguistic and psychological weaknesses but also contextualizes the internalization of FAST values in every phase of the learning project. By integrating these three components, this study provides a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic pedagogy and a practical contribution to the English language learning needs in PTKI. The model bridges the gap between student-centered modern learning strategies and the importance of character formation based on Islamic values in higher education.

3 METHOD

This study uses quantitative and qualitative descriptive approaches to comprehensively describe the needs of students in learning English speaking skills (Djafar et al., 2021). The quantitative approach is used to analyze closed questionnaire data distributed to students, while the qualitative approach supports context analysis and data interpretation, especially those related to the integration of Islamic values in the learning process. This study focuses on the needs analysis stage and the initial model design. Therefore, the scope of this study does not yet cover the model validation stage or field implementation, but stops at the formulation of a learning model designed based on the findings of student needs.

The subjects in this study were students of the English Language Education Study Program from three Islamic Universities in East Java, namely the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Ponorogo, Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo (UMPO), and Darussalam Gontor University (UNIDA). These three institutions were selected purposively because they have a strong Islamic background and provide speaking skills courses as part of the core curriculum (Scott et al., 2020). The sampling technique used the purposive sampling method, with the criteria of students who have taken the Speaking course for at least one semester and are willing to provide information through a questionnaire. The number of respondents successfully collected consisted of 22 IAIN Ponorogo students, 22 UMPO students, and 5 UNIDA students, so that the total number of respondents was 47 students. This number is considered representative to describe the need for speaking learning in an Islamic University environment based on Islamic values.

Table 1

Distribution of sample numbers

Higher Education	Number of Respondents
IAIN Ponorogo	22 respondents
Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo (UMPO)	22 respondents
Darussalam Gontor University (UNIDA)	5 respondents
Total	47 respondents

Data collection in this study was conducted using two main types of instruments, namely closed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The main instrument in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire 1-4 was developed to measure students' needs in

learning English speaking skills. This questionnaire covers three main aspects of needs analysis, namely: necessities (needs that students must have), lacks (weaknesses faced by students), and learning needs and wants (expectations and learning preferences).

The design of the questionnaire items refers to theories from experts, such as Dheressa et al (Dheressa et al., 2024) for the importance of speaking and learning objectives; Ghafar & Amin (Ghafar & M. Amin, 2022) and Mahdi (Mahdi, 2024) for the form and activities of speaking learning; Widiastuti et al. (Widiastuti et al., 2022) for components and problems of speaking; and Fakhurrazzi et al. (Fakhurrazzi et al., 2023) for strategies, evaluation, and integration of Islamic values (Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh/FAST) in the learning process.

The data in this study were analyzed using two approaches: descriptive statistics for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Quantitative data from the questionnaire were processed using mean, mode, and percentage calculations to describe general tendencies related to students' needs, weaknesses, and preferences in speaking learning. Meanwhile, qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were analyzed using the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and verification according to the Miles and Huberman model, to identify key themes that enrich the meaning of quantitative data. This analysis also revealed a deeper learning context, including students' perceptions of the integration of Islamic values. The results of these two approaches became the basis for designing an initial model of speaking learning based on Project-Based Learning, contextual, and integrated with FAST values.

The research procedure is systematically designed to ensure the achievement of objectives, starting from identifying needs to formulating an initial learning model. This process involves five main stages that are interconnected. First, a preliminary study and literature review are conducted to examine theories about speaking, Project-Based Learning (PjBL), and the integration of Islamic values in language education. This review is the basis for developing instruments and determining the focus of the needs analysis. Second, a questionnaire is prepared and distributed, which is developed based on expert theories and adjusted to the context of PTKI students, to obtain quantitative data on perceptions and learning needs. Third, the data is analyzed using descriptive statistics for the questionnaire and thematic analysis of interview results to reveal patterns of needs, preferences, and gaps between actual practices and student expectations. Fourth, the specifications for the initial PjBL-based speaking learning model are formulated, which

integrates FAST values (Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh), including activity structure, learning objectives, lecturer roles, project types, and value content. This procedure ensures that the developed model is based on empirical data, pedagogically relevant, and in accordance with Islamic educational values.

Table 2

Research Procedures

Stage	Activity	Output
1	Preliminary study and literature review	Theoretical review and conceptual framework
2	Preparation and distribution of needs analysis questionnaires	Primary data on students' needs
3	Analysis of student needs data	Findings of needs and barriers in speaking learning
4	Formulation of initial model specifications based on integrated Islamic value PjBL	Draft of initial learning model: objectives, content, strategies, FAST values

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The aspect of necessities in this study aims to describe students' perceptions of the importance of speaking skills in academic and social contexts. Based on data obtained from 49 respondents, this aspect was measured through three indicators: self-confidence in everyday communication, the ability to explore ideas with people from various countries, and the courage to speak in public.

Table 3

Average Score and Number of Respondents for the Necessities Aspect

No	Indicators	Average Score	Percentage of Respondents (Score 3–4)	Number of Respondents (Score 3–4)
1	Confidence in everyday communication	3.59	95.9%	47
2	Expressing ideas with people from different countries	3.43	98.0%	48
3	Confidence in public speaking	3.67	98.0%	48

The analysis results are shown in Table 2. A total of 47 respondents (95.9%) agreed or strongly agreed that speaking is important for building self-confidence in everyday communication, with an average score of 3.59. In addition, 48 respondents (98.0%) indicated that they learn speaking to express ideas to people from various

countries, reflecting students' global awareness of the function of cross-cultural communication, with an average score of 3.43. The indicator with the highest average is self-confidence in public speaking, at 3.67, also agreed upon by 98.0% of respondents, indicating that students are highly aware of the importance of speaking as a performative skill in academic and formal presentation contexts. Overall, the data shows that students have a very strong perception of the urgency of mastering speaking skills, both for daily interaction needs, cross-cultural social contexts, and academic requirements.

The aspect of lacks focuses on identifying the weaknesses students face in mastering speaking skills. The indicators used include linguistic aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as psychological aspects such as self-confidence and fear of making mistakes.

Table 4

Average Score and Number of Respondents for the Lacks Aspect

No	Indicators	Average Score	% Respondents (Score 3–4)	Number of Respondents (Score 3–4)
1	Difficulty speaking English (general)	2.67	57.1%	28
2	Lack of fluency	2.08	24.5%	12
3	Difficulty constructing grammar	2.92	77.6%	38
4	Difficulty selecting vocabulary	2.98	75.5%	37
5	Difficulty in pronunciation	2.50	46.9%	23
6	Difficulty speaking spontaneously	2.84	63.3%	31
7	Fear of making mistakes	3.06	73.5%	36

The quantitative results indicate that the main weaknesses of students lie in grammar (2.92), vocabulary (2.98), and speaking spontaneity (2.84), with over 60% of respondents reporting difficulties in these areas. The fear of making mistakes also stands out, with an average score of 3.06 and 73.5% of respondents agreeing, highlighting the impact of psychological factors on students' speaking performance. These findings are consistent with the results of interviews with instructors. One instructor noted, "Students often get stuck during speaking because they have to remember the script they prepared, and they get confused when they forget it." Another instructor added that common issues include "limited vocabulary, nervousness, and inadequate understanding of grammar and sentence structure." Thus, the need for a learning approach that facilitates spontaneous

speaking, boosts self-confidence, and strengthens linguistic foundations in a contextual manner is urgent.

The aspect of learning needs and wants in this study aims to identify students' preferences regarding the form, content, and procedures of speaking instruction they expect. This forms an essential basis for designing a learning model that aligns with the characteristics of students and the principles of Project-Based Learning (PjBL).

Table 5

Average Score and Number of Respondents for the Learning Needs and Wants Aspect

No	Indicators	Average Score	% Respondents (Score 3–4)	Number of Respondents (Score 3–4)
1	Want to be involved in projects in speaking learning	3.12	83.7%	41
2	Want contextual and relevant projects (real life)	3.29	95.9%	47
3	Want to practice describing images in speaking	2.98	79.6%	39
4	Interested in role play practices	3.08	83.7%	41
5	Want speaking topics that contain Islamic values	2.86	73.5%	36

The quantitative results show that the majority of students have a high enthusiasm for project-based learning. A total of 95.9% of respondents strongly support projects relevant to real-life contexts, with the highest score on the indicator "Contextual Projects" (average 3.29). In addition, 83.7% of students are interested in actively participating in speaking projects and role-playing practices, indicating a preference for active and collaborative learning. Students also show a high interest in activities that train visualization and description, such as describing images (79.6%), and incorporating Islamic topics into speaking materials (73.5%). This provides an opportunity to integrate Islamic values (such as FAST: Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, Tabligh) into learning projects without reducing the linguistic elements.

These findings strongly support the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) approach, which emphasizes learning through meaningful, collaborative, contextual projects, and developing 21st-century skills. Students' preferences for real-life contexts, integration of religious values, and participatory methods reinforce the urgency of developing an Islamic-based PjBL speaking learning model.

As part of the context of Islamic Higher Education, this study also examines students' perceptions of the integration of Islamic values in speaking learning. These

values include the principles of Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh (FAST) which are part of the formation of Islamic character. This perception is measured through four main indicators: development of Islamic topics, projects with Islamic values, Islamic vocabulary materials, and integration of FAST values in speaking materials.

Table 6

Results of the t-Test of Student Perceptions of Islamic Value Integration

No	Indicator	Average	t-Statistics	p-Value	Significant (p < 0.05)
1	Want speaking topics to be developed into Islamic values	2.86	3.40	0.0014	Yes
2	Speaking projects with Islamic values	2.69	1.71	0.0946	No
3	Speaking materials contain Islamic vocabulary and values	2.60	0.98	0.3320	No
4	Speaking materials refer to FAST values (Fathanah, Amanah, etc.)	2.67	1.34	0.1852	No

The analysis results indicate that only the first indicator, "Islamic value-based speaking topics," has a significantly positive perception ($p = 0.0014$). The average score of 2.86 on this indicator suggests that the majority of students support the integration of Islamic values in the form of themes or contexts in speaking learning, for example through dialogues, narratives, or discussion topics relevant to Islamic values. Meanwhile, the other three indicators although showing averages above the neutral value (2.5), are not statistically significant. This indicates that students' acceptance of the integration of Islamic values is still selective and gradual. They are more open to the introduction of values through thematic contexts compared to direct application in materials or evaluation formats.

Interview results with instructors support these findings. One instructor mentioned that "Islamic values such as Islamic greetings, tadarus, or starting classes with motivational verses are already customary in creating an Islamic atmosphere, even though they are not yet structured into speaking materials." This shows that Islamic values are already present in the classroom culture, even if they are not formally integrated into the curriculum design. Thus, in developing an Islamic value-based speaking learning model, it is important to start with contextual and applicable themes or projects, and then gradually integrate value dimensions such as FAST through reflective and dialogical approaches, rather than instructional ones.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to deepen and clarify the quantitative findings, particularly regarding students' weaknesses in speaking, learning needs, and perceptions of the integration of Islamic values. The interview results with instructors revealed several important themes that reinforced the questionnaire data. Instructors observed that grammar difficulties, limited vocabulary, and low self-confidence are the main obstacles for students. One informant stated:

"Students often get stuck during speaking because they have to remember the script they prepared, and they get confused when they forget it." (Interview with Instructor, IAIN Ponorogo)

This reinforces the quantitative data showing low fluency and spontaneity. Both students and instructors agreed that speaking learning needs to be more practical, contextual, and collaborative. Projects involving real-life experiences and authentic communication were deemed more effective:

"When practicing role-plays or discussions, students are more active, and they more quickly grasp vocabulary and sentence structures." (Interview with Instructor, UMPO)

These findings support the high interest of students in project-based activities and role-playing revealed in the questionnaire. Although the integration of Islamic values has not been formally structured, Islamic values are already present in the classroom atmosphere and opening activities:

"At the beginning of the class, we usually start with greetings, tadarus (recitation of the Quran), and sharing motivational verses in English or Indonesian before speaking practice." (Interview with Instructor, UNIDA)

However, most instructors reported that FAST values have not been explicitly taught in speaking materials but rather through modeling and an Islamic classroom atmosphere. The general findings of the interviews were also analyzed using coding analysis as summarized in the following table.

Table 7*Coding Analysis of Interview Findings*

No	Interview Quotes	Thematic Categories	Analysis Code
1	“Students often get stuck when speaking because they have to remember the script that has been prepared.”	Weaknesses in fluency	Low fluency, non-spontaneous speaking
2	“They are confused about continuing when they forget a sentence.”	Language difficulties	Weak sentence structure
3	“Lack of vocabulary, nervous, and lack of understanding of grammar and sentence structure.”	Linguistic and psychological barriers	Limited vocabulary, afraid of making mistakes
4	“When practicing role play or discussions, students are more active.”	Learning method preferences	Role play preferred, active participation
5	“They grasp vocabulary and sentence structure faster.”	Effectiveness of practice-based activities	Practical strategies help retention
6	“Islamic values are applied such as greetings, tadarus, motivational verses.”	Integration of Islamic values	FAST scores through classroom routines
7	“There has been no explicit teaching of the values of Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, Tabligh in speaking.”	Limitations of FAST value integration	Not structured

The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses reveal three main needs of students in speaking learning: (1) weaknesses in grammar, vocabulary, and fluency; (2) psychological barriers such as lack of self-confidence and fear of making mistakes; and (3) the need for learning that is contextual, collaborative, and based on Islamic values. There is a gap between the traditional (teacher-centered) learning practices and students' expectations to be involved in meaningful and project-based activities. Although Islamic values have implicitly emerged in the classroom, there is no systematic integration of FAST values (Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh) in the speaking materials, activities, or evaluations. These findings form the basis for designing an initial Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model integrated with Islamic values, aimed at enhancing students' speaking competence actively, critically, and with character through a constructivist approach, project-based learning, and value education.

Table 8*Initial Model Design of PjBL-Based Speaking Learning Integrated with Islamic Values*

PjBL (Project-Based Learning) Stages	Learning Activities	Role of Lecturer	Integration of Islamic Values (FAST)
Project Orientation	The teacher explains the objectives, benefits, and final results of the speaking project	Motivating and opening with Islamic greetings	Shiddiq: Honesty in conveying intentions

Planning	Students prepare a speaking project plan (theme, objectives, source of materials)	Facilitator and mentor	Fathanah: Smart planning
Information Gathering	Students look for Islamic materials/topics for the project (character stories, moral values)	Providing direction and references	Amanah: Responsible for sources
Product Development	Students create a script for a dialogue/story, or simulation in speaking	Monitoring the collaborative process	Tabligh: Delivering the right message
Presentation/Performance	Students present their speaking results (monologue/dialogue/creative project)	Assessor and feedback provider	Shiddiq & Tabligh: Honesty & delivery
Reflection & Evaluation	Students evaluate the process and results of speaking; give and receive feedback	Providing reflection based on Islamic values	Amanah & Fathanah: Responsible and wise evaluation

The findings of this study indicate that students in Islamic higher education institutions demonstrate strong awareness of the importance of speaking skills in academic, social, and professional contexts. This is reflected in their high perception scores regarding the urgency of speaking proficiency, particularly for boosting self-confidence in daily communication, expressing ideas, and public speaking. However, quantitative and qualitative data also reveal gaps in their abilities, including weaknesses in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, as well as psychological barriers such as nervousness and fear of making mistakes. These findings highlight the need for a learning approach that addresses both linguistic and affective challenges.

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) integrated with Islamic values emerges as a highly promising solution. Consistent with prior research (Shi et al., 2024; Song et al., 2024), PjBL has been proven to enhance EFL students' speaking skills, critical thinking, and learning motivation. Additionally, integrating PjBL with higher-order thinking assessments improves students' confidence and participation in speaking activities (Song et al., 2024), while locally relevant or religious content strengthens fluency and vocabulary mastery (Tu, 2024; Usman & Mahmud, 2024). In the context of Islamic education, PjBL combined with integrative strategies not only enhances speaking performance but also fosters engagement, collaboration, and values such as effective communication, responsibility, and self-discipline (Aldobekhi & Abahussain, 2024; Ghosheh Wahbeh et al., 2021).

The research findings indicate that students face significant challenges in the linguistic aspects of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. These weaknesses directly

impact their speaking abilities, as revealed by the relatively low quantitative scores on these indicators. This finding aligns with Dheressa et al. (Dheressa et al., 2024) view that speaking comprises structural components such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, which must be mastered simultaneously. Vizhi and Rathnasabapathy (Vizhi & Rathnasabapathy, 2023) also emphasized that difficulties in speaking often stem from limited lexical resources and unstable sentence structures. Moreover, Menggo et al. (Menggo et al., 2023) noted that fluency and accuracy issues cannot be addressed solely through individual practice but require a structured and communicative learning design.

Psychological barriers such as nervousness, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes significantly hinder students' English-speaking performance (Sharifian et al., 2021; Yessenbekova, 2024). These affective factors often lead to avoidance of active participation, especially in high-pressure situations. A supportive, non-judgmental learning environment is crucial to address these challenges. Project-Based Learning (PjBL) has proven effective in this regard, as its collaborative and reflective nature reduces performance anxiety compared to traditional assessments (Menggo et al., 2023; Yessenbekova, 2024). By working on tangible group projects, students feel empowered rather than pressured.

The study reveals students' strong preference for contextual, collaborative, and project-based activities like role-play, image descriptions, and real-life speaking projects. This aligns with PjBL principles (Ghosheh Wahbeh et al., 2021; Izzah, 2021), where authentic problem-solving and collaboration enhance engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (Guo et al., 2020). In EFL contexts, thematic dialogues, simulations, and Islamic-content projects not only improve linguistic competence but also nurture social and religious values. For instance, role-playing allows students to embody traits like *amanah* (trustworthiness) and *shiddiq* (honesty) in oral communication. The instructor's role shifts from knowledge transmitter to facilitator, providing scaffolding while preserving student autonomy (Schaddelee & McConnell, 2018). This approach helps students navigate projects, overcome barriers, and reflect on embedded values, making PjBL a holistic solution for linguistic and affective challenges in Islamic higher education.

Nonetheless, the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) necessitates continuous planning and monitoring, particularly within the context of Islamic higher education. Mustafa et al. (Mustafa et al., 2024) emphasized that PjBL should be integrated

with other approaches, such as Teaching at the Right Level, to ensure that all students reap the optimal benefits of this approach. Consequently, the design of the learning model must take into account not only the preferences of students but also the readiness of institutions and educators to effectively and adaptively adopt this approach.

Research findings indicate that students generally hold a positive perception towards the integration of Islamic values in speaking learning. However, only the form of integration through Islamic topics such as stories or themes imbued with Islamic values has demonstrated statistical significance (mean = 2.86; $p = 0.0014$). Other aspects, such as the use of Islamic vocabulary, religious-themed projects, and the explicit incorporation of the FAST (Fathanah, Amanah, Shiddiq, Tabligh) values in teaching methods, remain at a moderate level of acceptance, albeit with scores above neutral. These findings align with the view that the Islamization of knowledge, especially in language education, needs to be carried out gradually, contextually, and adaptively (Fakhrurrazi et al., 2023; Puspitasari & Yuliana, 2022). The FAST values hold great potential in shaping learners' character, but they have not yet been fully internalized in teaching practice. Barriers such as student readiness, curricular pressure, and limitations in teacher training act as hindrances to systemic integration (Afrida et al., 2024). Therefore, a gradual strategy is required, for instance, through group projects to instill the values of Amanah and Tabligh, as well as reflective themes to develop Fathanah and Shiddiq, accompanied by teacher training in Islamic communication-based pedagogy. In this way, Islamic values are not only taught conceptually but also brought to life in meaningful speaking activities.

The findings of this study support the development of a speaking learning model that is active, collaborative, contextual, and integrated with Islamic values, in accordance with the frameworks of constructivism, Project-Based Learning (PjBL), and Islamic moral education. Students have demonstrated a high need for speaking activities that stimulate self-confidence, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. This aligns with the principles of PjBL, which emphasize the active role of students in creating meaning through collaboration and real products (Izzah, 2021). In the Islamic context, the integration of FAST values imbues the learning process with character, transforming speaking from a mere language skill to a means of character formation (Puspitasari & Yuliana, 2022; Triana et al., 2023). Thus, the developed model not only addresses linguistic skill gaps but also responds to the challenge of forming Islamic character among students in the context of Islamic higher education. This supports the approach of the

Islamization of knowledge, which demands the harmonization of academic competence mastery and religious value internalization within the learning process (Fakhrurrazi et al., 2023).

The initial model designed in this study makes an original contribution by integrating three elements that are rarely explicitly combined in the literature: speaking skills, PjBL methods, and FAST values. This model complements the literature on PjBL in the context of language learning, while also expanding the framework of Islamic education by providing a practical approach to value internalization in foreign language learning (Aldobekhi & Abahussain, 2024; Usman & Mahmud, 2024). While the majority of studies focus on the technical aspects of speaking or learning motivation, this model bridges the affective, social, and spiritual aspects of students within a single integrated approach.

The potential for further development of this model is wide open, whether through validation by experts, limited trials, or implementation in the learning contexts of various Islamic higher education institutions. For practitioners, this model offers a novel approach to enhancing speaking skills while simultaneously fostering Islamic character development. The integration of FAST values into speaking tasks can serve as a practical tool for internalizing Islamic principles, making language learning a holistic educational experience. The main strength of this study lies in its strong theoretical foundation and pedagogical innovation that integrates linguistic and moral aspects, which have not been extensively developed in Islamic-based EFL education. This model can serve as a blueprint for educators seeking to harmonize language skills with moral values, providing a balanced and comprehensive approach to teaching speaking in Islamic higher education. By addressing both linguistic and moral dimensions, this model can contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals who are not only proficient in language but also grounded in Islamic principles.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the needs analysis and initial model design processes conducted in this study, it can be concluded that the research objectives have been thoroughly achieved. The study successfully identified the linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical needs of students in speaking learning, while also formulating an initial design for a Project-Based

Learning (PjBL) model integrated with Islamic values. The synthesis of both quantitative and qualitative data indicates that a learning approach that is contextual, collaborative, and imbued with Islamic moral values holds great potential for addressing the speaking skill challenges faced by students in Islamic higher education institutions. Thus, this research not only successfully addresses the problem formulation but also makes a tangible contribution to the development of academically relevant and value-oriented pedagogical innovation. Future studies could also expand the institutional context by involving a broader range of Islamic higher education institutions to achieve stronger generalizability. Additionally, the development of evaluation instruments capable of measuring Islamic value-based character aspects within the context of language learning represents a promising area for future research.

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Authors' Contribution

Both authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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