



Structured language immersion activities for developing oral proficiency among non-native Arabic-speaking students

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ABSTRACT

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Language immersion is commonly classified into two forms: natural immersion, where learners interact with authentic second-language environments, and structured or planned immersion, which takes place in intentionally designed educational settings. Building on this distinction, the present study examines the effectiveness of a structured program of language immersion activities in developing oral proficiency among first-year African university students who are non-native Arabic speakers. The participants came from diverse linguistic backgrounds, with native languages including English, French, and various local languages. Over a two-month period at King Faisal University, the students engaged in a carefully crafted set of language immersion activities designed to enrich their exposure to meaningful, socially interactive, and communication-rich environments. The program incorporated a variety of experiential and communicative tasks, such as role-playing real-life scenarios, guided storytelling circles, peer dialogue workshops, interactive vocabulary-based games, and short reflective audio recordings. A quasi-experimental design was employed with a single group of 35 students, using an oral proficiency test to measure three key dimensions of speaking performance: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency. The findings revealed significant improvements between the pre-test and post-test scores across all three dimensions, with results favoring the post-test. These findings underscore the value of sustained exposure to structured, linguistically rich, and socially engaging immersion activities in promoting measurable gains in students' oral Arabic proficiency. The findings also reaffirm that sustained exposure to a second language through well-designed, pre-planned activities within communication-rich environments can significantly enhance learners' oral development.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the field of teaching Arabic as a second language by examining the impact of structured language immersion activities on the oral proficiency of non-native Arabic-speaking university students. Unlike many studies that discuss the immersion conceptually, the present study develops and implements a set of carefully designed indoor and outdoor immersion activities within a university context. It also provides empirical evidence on how such activities support the development of three key dimensions of oral proficiency: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language immersion has long been recognized as an important approach in second-language education because it reflects the inherently social and communicative nature of language learning. Within immersive environments,

learners are exposed to the target language in meaningful contexts that encourage interaction, negotiation of meaning, and active participation. Through such experiences, students gradually develop linguistic, cognitive, and cultural competencies that support more confident engagement with the target language (Mansour, 2021). Cultural immersion further strengthens this process by allowing learners to encounter the language in authentic situations, helping them understand how meaning is conveyed in everyday communication and how language is shaped by social and cultural contexts (Soleha et al., 2024). In this sense, immersion moves beyond the simple transmission of grammatical knowledge and instead promotes language development through communicative use and contextualized practice.

From a pedagogical perspective, immersion refers to an educational approach in which the target language becomes the primary medium of communication and instruction. Learners are encouraged to use the language consistently across academic tasks and interactive activities, allowing them to develop communicative competence through repeated exposure and meaningful use (Cervantes-Soon, 2014). When applied to teaching Arabic as a second language, immersion provides learners with opportunities to practice Modern Standard Arabic in authentic and simulated communicative situations, thereby strengthening both linguistic accuracy and functional language use (Saighi, 2025). Research suggests that sustained engagement in such environments supports the gradual development of vocabulary, structural knowledge, and expressive ability, particularly when learners are given frequent opportunities to interact in the target language (Huang, Tian, Wang, & Liaw, 2025; Weng, Schmidt, Huang, & Hao, 2024).

In practice, immersion-based instruction often requires instructors and learners to rely primarily on the target language during classroom interaction and learning activities. This approach reduces dependence on intermediary languages and encourages learners to process and produce meaning directly in the new language (Morales, 2025). Previous studies have shown that such environments can support the development of communicative competence among learners of Arabic as a foreign language, particularly when learners are engaged in authentic or semi-authentic communicative situations that require active language use (Ismail, 2022).

Scholars commonly distinguish between two broad forms of immersion: natural immersion and structured immersion. Natural immersion occurs when learners live or interact within communities where the target language is used in daily life. Structured immersion, in contrast, is intentionally designed within educational contexts to simulate authentic language use through carefully planned learning experiences. These may include communicative tasks, collaborative dialogue, and contextualized language activities that encourage learners to practice the language in meaningful ways. Such structured environments allow students to gradually internalize linguistic patterns, build confidence, and develop communicative competence even when full natural immersion is not available.

A growing body of research also highlights the importance of interactive immersion activities that allow learners to engage in dialogue, collaborative problem-solving, and spontaneous communication. These activities can create low-pressure environments where students experiment with language forms, expand their vocabulary, and refine their communicative strategies through practice and feedback (Tseng, Liu, Hsu, & Chu, 2024). When carefully designed, immersion-based activities may support the development of structural accuracy, lexical range, and fluency in spoken communication (Khemis, 2025).

Despite the recognized importance of immersion in second-language learning, empirical research examining structured immersion programs for teaching Arabic to non-native university students remains relatively limited. Many studies focus on general immersion principles or on immersion in other languages, while fewer investigations provide detailed evidence on how specifically designed immersion activities influence different dimensions of oral proficiency in Arabic. In particular, there is a need for studies that examine how structured immersion experiences can support the development of structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency among learners studying Arabic in university contexts. In response to this gap, the present study examines the effectiveness of a structured program of language immersion activities designed for non-native Arabic-speaking university students. The program

integrates a range of communicative tasks, including role-playing situations, storytelling activities, peer dialogue sessions, vocabulary-based interaction tasks, and reflective speaking exercises, to create sustained opportunities for meaningful language use. The study seeks to determine the extent to which such activities contribute to improving learners' oral proficiency across three key dimensions: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language immersion is widely discussed in research on second-language learning because it places learners in situations where the target language is used for real communication rather than isolated practice. When learners interact in meaningful contexts, they gradually build linguistic competence while also gaining cultural and pragmatic awareness (Porter & Castillo, 2023). In this view, language learning develops through participation in social interaction rather than through memorization of rules alone. Recent discussions of immersion also stress its cognitive dimension, noting that communicative engagement encourages learners to process language more deeply and connect it with real experiences (Palamar, Brovko, & Semerikov, 2024). In the context of Arabic as a second language, recent research has highlighted the importance of adopting targeted instructional strategies that address the specific challenges faced by non-native learners. For example, Almelhes (2024) emphasizes that effective Arabic language acquisition requires integrating communicative practice with structured linguistic support, particularly in areas such as vocabulary development and grammatical accuracy.

Immersion environments are typically described along a continuum ranging from natural exposure to carefully organized educational settings. Natural immersion occurs when learners live or study within communities where the target language is spoken in daily life. Structured immersion, by contrast, is intentionally designed within educational programs to create sustained opportunities for communication in the target language. In such settings, the language becomes the primary medium of interaction during classroom activities and collaborative tasks, allowing learners to internalize structures and develop confidence in speaking through repeated use (Robbani et al., 2024). Researchers often note that the effectiveness of immersion lies less in exposure alone and more in the quality of communicative interaction that accompanies it (Blyth, 2018; Ó Ceallaigh, Hourigan, & Leavy, 2021).

Different forms of immersion have been implemented in educational contexts. Some programs rely on full immersion, where most instruction takes place in the target language, while others adopt partial or dual-language approaches that balance the new language with learners' first language (Nicolaidou, Pissas, & Boglou, 2023; Zhi & Wu, 2023). Each model reflects different pedagogical choices, yet they share a common aim: creating conditions in which learners can use the language frequently and meaningfully. Through such experiences, learners are encouraged to experiment with language forms, expand their vocabulary, and gradually develop communicative fluency (Blyth, 2018).

In recent years, the range of immersion environments has expanded. In addition to classroom-based programs and study-abroad contexts, technological developments have introduced new forms of digital immersion. Virtual and augmented reality environments, for example, allow learners to engage in simulated communicative situations that resemble real-world interaction (Robbani et al., 2024). These environments can support language learning by increasing learners' engagement and providing opportunities for experimentation and interaction that may not always be available in traditional classrooms (Tseng et al., 2024). Similar observations have been made in studies of structured classroom immersion, where carefully designed activities such as collaborative tasks, guided interaction, and contextualized language practice create conditions that encourage learners to use the target language actively (El-Din Samir & Haidara, 2025).

Immersion-based learning tends to support language development when learners are given sustained opportunities to communicate and interact using the target language. Whether immersion takes place in natural environments, structured educational programs, or technology-supported settings, meaningful engagement with the

language can contribute to improvements in structural competence, vocabulary development, and spoken fluency (El-Din Samir & Haidara, 2025; Robbani et al., 2024; Tseng et al., 2024).

Supporting this perspective, Nasirudeen (2024) found that immersion-based approaches significantly contribute to the development of Arabic language skills among non-native learners, particularly when learners are consistently engaged in authentic communicative situations. Similarly, Samir, Haidara, Alghazali, and Badran (2025) demonstrated that structured immersion programs can effectively enhance multiple dimensions of language proficiency, including speaking skills, by providing sustained exposure to meaningful language use.

Several studies have examined the role of immersion-based environments in supporting language learning and communicative development. Research suggests that immersion programs can contribute not only to linguistic development but also to broader cognitive and educational outcomes. For example, evidence from dual-language immersion programs indicates that sustained participation in immersive learning environments may positively influence students' academic achievement and overall language development (Morales, 2025). Similarly, investigations into bilingual language processing show that intensive immersion experiences help learners manage competing languages more effectively and support the development of fluency, vocabulary expansion, and structural control in the target language (Zhang, Diaz, Guo, & Kroll, 2021). At the level of specific instructional practices, role-play activities have been shown to be particularly effective in improving speaking skills among non-native Arabic learners. Abdulhafid, Mustapha, Hassan, and Ismail (2024) report that engaging students in simulated real-life interactions enhances their ability to use language spontaneously and improves both fluency and communicative confidence. Such findings align with the principles of structured immersion, where interaction-based activities serve as a core mechanism for language development.

Other studies emphasize the pedagogical conditions that make immersion programs effective. In the context of Arabic language education, Khemis (2025) highlights the importance of creating comprehensive linguistic environments that provide learners with continuous exposure to the formal Arabic register through interactive activities and rich educational content. The study also points to the value of integrating immersion practices within educational settings through approaches such as interactive classroom tasks, language villages, and technology-supported learning environments. Recent research has also explored learners' and teachers' perceptions of immersion-based approaches. Anwar, Assapari, and Aziz (2025) found that both students and instructors perceive linguistic immersion as a highly effective strategy for enhancing Arabic speaking proficiency, especially when supported by interactive and context-rich activities. These perceptions further endorse integrating structured immersion practices within formal educational settings.

The success of immersion programs also depends on the design of instructional contexts and the preparation of educators. Ó Ceallaigh et al. (2021) demonstrate that teachers working in immersion settings often face challenges in balancing language development with academic content. Their findings show that structured professional preparation helps teachers integrate language objectives with subject learning more effectively, which in turn supports learners' linguistic development within immersion classrooms.

In recent years, technological innovations have also expanded the possibilities for immersion-based learning. A systematic review by Weng et al. (2024) shows that immersive technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed-reality environments can provide learners with realistic and interactive contexts for language use. These environments appear to increase learners' engagement and provide opportunities for meaningful communication, which may contribute to improvements in vocabulary development, structural competence, and oral fluency even when natural immersion is not available. In addition, emerging research on the integration of digital tools in language education suggests a growing intersection between immersion practices and technology-enhanced learning. Al-Saliti, Ismail, Elmorsy, and Shahpo (2025) highlight how generative AI tools are increasingly used to support language learning processes, especially in developing writing and communication skills. Although their study focuses on

writing, it highlights the broader shift toward interactive, technology-supported language environments, sharing key features with modern immersion-based approaches.

Sociocultural and family-related factors may also influence the effectiveness of immersion programs. Huang et al. (2025) report that learners' success in dual-language immersion programs is often associated with supportive family attitudes toward multilingualism and with educational environments that provide varied communicative experiences. When immersion programs combine structured curricula with rich opportunities for interaction, learners are more likely to internalize linguistic structures, expand their vocabulary, and develop greater confidence in spoken communication.

A broader perspective is provided by systematic reviews of Arabic language teaching strategies. Yaacob, Yusoff, Baharudin, and Zulkifli (2024) highlight that effective approaches for developing Arabic speaking skills among non-native learners consistently emphasize communicative interaction, task-based learning, and immersion-oriented practices. These approaches collectively support the development of oral proficiency by promoting active language use in meaningful contexts.

Previous research indicates that immersion-based learning environments can play an important role in developing learners' communicative competence. When immersion programs are thoughtfully designed and implemented across different educational levels, they provide meaningful opportunities for interaction, encourage cognitive engagement, and allow learners to internalize language through authentic use. In such contexts, structured immersion activities, especially those that are carefully sequenced and supported, can contribute to improvements in structural competence, vocabulary development, and oral fluency. Despite this growing body of research, relatively few studies have examined how specifically designed structured immersion activities influence the oral proficiency of non-native Arabic-speaking university students. This gap highlights the need for empirical investigations that explore how structured immersion can be applied in Arabic language programs and how such experiences may support the development of learners' spoken language abilities in higher education contexts.

3. STUDY QUESTIONS

3.1. Main Study Question

To what extent do structured language-immersion activities contribute to the development of oral proficiency among non-native Arabic-speaking students?

3.2. Sub-Questions

Q1: To what extent do structured language-immersion activities enhance students' structural competence in Arabic?

Q2: To what extent do structured language-immersion activities expand students' vocabulary breadth?

Q3: To what extent do structured language-immersion activities improve students' oral fluency in real communicative situations?

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design

This study adopted a one-group quasi-experimental design using pre- and post-testing to examine the effectiveness of Structured Language Immersion Activities in developing oral proficiency among non-native Arabic-speaking students. The focus of the investigation centered on three key dimensions of oral performance: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency. This design was selected because it aligns well with the exploratory nature of the study and allows for a direct measurement of learners' progress after a targeted instructional intervention (Al-Zuhairi, 2017). The field experiment was conducted with 35 African students enrolled in an Arabic language program, all of whom were non-native speakers. Over the course of eight weeks, these learners participated

in a structured set of language immersion activities specifically designed to simulate authentic communicative situations. The intervention combined both indoor and outdoor immersion sessions, allowing learners to practice the language across varied environments. These activities will be described in detail in the section devoted to the instructional program. To evaluate learners' development across the three targeted dimensions, the study employed a specially designed oral proficiency test, administered before and after the intervention. This instrument provided a systematic measure of changes in structural accuracy, lexical range, and spoken fluency, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the immersion-based activities.

4.2. Participants and Context

The study involved 35 African students enrolled in the Arabic language program at the College of Arts, King Faisal University, Al Ahsa, Saudi Arabia. These students were non-native speakers of Arabic and had come to Saudi Arabia under the university's scholarship programs. First-year students were specifically chosen because they are at the initial stage of their university education, and they have an urgent need to improve their oral proficiency, particularly given their daily reliance on Arabic for communication in a native-speaking environment. Participants were selected through a simple random sampling method from a total population of 48 students. Each student was assigned a number, and participants were randomly drawn to form the study sample. The students represented six different African countries: Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal, with native languages including English, French, and various local languages.

Additionally, 10 native Arabic-speaking students from the same university, college, and academic specialization participated in the program as facilitators rather than learners. Their role was to assist peers during the structured language immersion activities designed for this study. The native Arabic facilitators did not participate in assessments and were not included in the study outcomes. It is important to note that the study sample consisted exclusively of male students, reflecting the gender-segregated structure of higher education in Saudi Arabia, where male and female students attend separate colleges. Table 1 provides a detailed description and demographic data of the study sample.

Table 1. Participants' Demographic Information*.

Variables	Description / Category	Number of Students	Percentage (%)	Mean Age (Years)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Total Sample	Non-native Arabic-speaking students	35	100	20.3	1.5
Country	Ghana	6	17.1	-	-
	Kenya	5	14.3	-	-
	South Africa	6	17.1	-	-
	Cameroon	6	17.1	-	-
	Côte d'Ivoire	6	17.1	-	-
	Senegal	6	17.1	-	-
Gender	Male	35	100	-	-
Academic Level	First-year university students	35	100	-	-
Facilitators	Facilitators (Native Arabic-speaking)	10	-	20.3	-

*Age is presented as mean $\pm$ standard deviation.

*Facilitators assisted with immersion activities but were excluded from assessments.

*Facilitators from the same academic level as the main sample.

4.3. Instrument Development

4.3.1. Structured Language Immersion Activities (Program Description)

The intervention consisted of a carefully designed set of Structured Language Immersion Activities implemented over eight weeks, combining indoor and outdoor learning environments to create meaningful, interactive, and

sustained exposure to Arabic. The activities were intentionally aligned with the study's three central dimensions of oral proficiency: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency, ensuring that students engaged with the language in ways that promoted progressive development across these domains.

The language immersion activities were implemented through both indoor and outdoor sessions. Indoor meetings took place twice a week in language laboratories or collaborative classrooms, where students practiced Arabic through guided communicative tasks suited to their proficiency level. These sessions offered a structured environment that allowed learners to focus on interaction and language use. In addition to classroom work, students also participated in outdoor activities once a week in different locations across the university campus and nearby supervised spaces. These sessions placed learners in everyday situations where Arabic was used more naturally, giving them opportunities to interact, ask questions, and communicate beyond the classroom setting.

Across all sessions, students received ongoing feedback from the instructional team and native-speaking facilitators. Activities were sequenced from simple to complex, allowing learners to gradually internalize linguistic patterns, expand their vocabulary, and speak with greater ease and accuracy.

To measure learners' progress, a researcher-developed oral proficiency test was administered before and after the intervention, assessing the same three target dimensions of the study: Structural Competence, Vocabulary Breadth, and Oral Fluency.

4.3.2. Oral Proficiency Test for Non-Native Arabic Learners (OPT-A)

Purpose of the instrument: To measure the effectiveness of the intervention, a researcher-developed Oral Proficiency Test (OPT-A) was constructed to assess the three core dimensions targeted in the present study: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency. The test was specifically tailored to the linguistic profile of non-native Arabic-speaking students enrolled in Level 1 of the Arabic program.

Structure of the test: The initial version of the test consisted of three sections, each designed to measure one of the study's oral proficiency dimensions.

Each section included three expressive tasks, yielding a total of nine performance tasks across the entire instrument.

Each dimension was scored out of 10 points, based on detailed analytic rating rubrics.

The maximum total score for the test was therefore 30 points.

To ensure fairness and consistency, each task required students to respond individually and spontaneously to communicative prompts that simulate everyday interactions relevant to university and community life.

Validity procedures: To establish content validity, the preliminary version of the OPT-A was reviewed by seven academic experts specializing in Arabic language pedagogy, curriculum design, and language assessment.

The experts evaluated the test based on:

- Clarity of task instructions.
- Appropriateness for beginning-level Arabic learners.
- Alignment with the three target dimensions.
- Linguistic load and cognitive demands.
- Relevance to real-life communication.

Based on their feedback, several refinements were made, including:

- Adjusting task phrasing to avoid cultural bias.
- Ensuring parallel difficulty across tasks within each section.
- Increasing examples to guide students without revealing answers.
- Improving the analytic rating rubric to increase scoring precision.

Reliability procedures: To estimate the reliability of the OPT-A, the revised test was piloted with a group of 10 non-native Arabic learners who shared the same academic level as the main study sample but were not included in the final intervention.

Internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding the following coefficients:

- Structural Competence: $\alpha = 0.84$.
- Vocabulary Breadth: $\alpha = 0.87$.
- Oral Fluency: $\alpha = 0.82$.
- Overall Test Reliability: $\alpha = 0.89$.

These values indicate high reliability and demonstrate that the test consistently measures the intended constructs.

Test duration: The optimal test duration was determined through the pilot implementation.

Based on average completion times recorded during the pilot, the final administration time for the OPT-A was set at 15–18 minutes per student, depending on the pacing of responses.

Additional enhancements (Added value): To strengthen the rigor and usability of the test, the following enhancements were integrated into the final version.

Analytic Scoring Rubrics:

- A four-band rubric for each dimension (0–10) was developed to reduce subjectivity and increase inter-rater reliability.
- Audio Recording Protocol:
- All student responses were audio-recorded to allow secondary scoring, ensure transparency, and support reliability checks.

Standardized Prompt Booklet: A booklet with scripted instructions for each task was prepared to maintain uniform administration across all sessions.

Rater Training Session: The Arabic-speaking facilitators received a short calibration session to ensure familiarity with the scoring rubrics and criteria.

4.4. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data for this study were collected using the Oral Proficiency Assessment Test, an instrument specifically designed for the purposes of this research. The test comprises three core dimensions aligned with the targeted outcomes of the instructional intervention: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency. In keeping with the quasi-experimental one-group pre-test/post-test design, data collection occurred across two stages.

During the first stage, the test was administered individually to 35 non-native Arabic-speaking African students before any instructional exposure. This pre-test provided a baseline measure of learners' oral proficiency prior to participating in structured language immersion activities.

Following this initial assessment, the instructional program developed in light of Structured Language Immersion Activities was implemented over a period of eight weeks at King Faisal University. The program combined indoor sessions (such as guided dialogues, controlled linguistic tasks, and structured drills) with outdoor sessions (including real-life interaction tasks, micro-immersion scenarios, and situational communication activities). These activities were intentionally sequenced to provide repeated, meaningful exposure to language structures, functional vocabulary use, and opportunities to improve fluency in authentic communicative contexts.

After completing the intervention, the same Oral Proficiency Assessment Test was administered again as a post-test under the same conditions as the pre-test. The resulting data were coded, entered, and analyzed using SPSS software.

To determine the effectiveness of the instructional program, paired-sample t-tests were performed to compare pre- and post-test mean scores across the three dimensions. This analysis involved calculating means, standard

deviations, and mean differences for both measurement points. Additionally, the practical significance of the program's impact was assessed by computing Eta-squared (η^2) as an effect size indicator, allowing for a clearer interpretation of the magnitude of improvement attributable to the intervention.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are presented in alignment with the main research question and its three sub-questions. Data were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to examine pre- and post-intervention differences in students' oral proficiency across the three targeted dimensions: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency. Effect sizes were calculated using eta squared (η^2) to determine the magnitude of the program's impact.

5.1. Overall Improvement in Oral Proficiency (Main Study Question)

To address the main research question, the extent to which structured language-immersion activities contribute to the overall development of oral proficiency among non-native Arabic-speaking students, a paired-sample t-test was conducted comparing pre- and post-test total scores on the Oral Proficiency Test, which combines the three subscales. Table 2 summarizes the results.

Table 2. Paired-Sample t-Test Results for Overall Oral Proficiency (N = 35).

Measure	Mean (Pre)	SD (Pre)	Mean (Post)	SD (Post)	t(34)	p	η^2 (Effect Size)
Total Oral Proficiency Score (Max = 30)	13.09	3.36	23.71	3.68	13.42	< 0.001	0.84

Results in Table 2 show a marked overall improvement in students' oral proficiency following the structured language-immersion program. These indoor and outdoor activities provided learners with intensive, meaningful, and interactive practice, enabling measurable development in overall oral proficiency.

5.2. Improvement in Structural Competence (Sub-Question 1)

To address the first sub-question, the extent to which structured language-immersion activities enhance students' structural competence in Arabic, a paired-sample t-test was conducted comparing pre- and post-test scores on the structural competence subscale of the Oral Proficiency Test. Table 3 presents the findings.

Table 3. Paired-Sample t-Test results for structural competence (N = 35).

Measure	Mean (Pre)	SD (Pre)	Mean (Post)	SD (Post)	t(34)	p	η^2 (Effect Size)
Structural Competence Score (Max = 10)	4.12	1.38	7.83	1.21	11.27	< 0.001	0.79

Table 3 shows a clear and statistically significant improvement in students' structural competence following participation in the structured immersion program. This suggests that the activities, especially those emphasizing pattern noticing, guided communicative practice, and context-rich sentence production, played a key role in enhancing students' structural control in spoken Arabic.

5.3. Improvement in Vocabulary Breadth (Sub-Question 2)

To address the second sub-question, the extent to which structured language-immersion activities expand students' vocabulary breadth, a paired-sample t-test was conducted comparing pre- and post-test performance on the vocabulary breadth subscale of the Oral Proficiency Test. Table 4 summarizes the results.

Table 4. Paired-Sample t-Test results for vocabulary breadth (N = 35).

Measure	Mean (Pre)	SD (Pre)	Mean (Post)	SD (Post)	t(34)	p	η^2 (Effect Size)
Vocabulary breadth score (Max = 10)	3.76	1.52	8.02	1.09	12.14	< .001	0.81

Results in Table 4 reveal a substantial improvement in students' vocabulary breadth following the structured immersion program. This demonstrates the strong influence of immersion activities, particularly those involving outdoor interaction, real-life communicative tasks, and context-rich exposure, on expanding students' lexical repertoire.

5.4. Improvement in Oral Fluency (Sub-Question 3)

To address the third sub-question, the extent to which structured language-immersion activities improve students' oral fluency in real communicative situations, a paired-sample t-test was conducted comparing pre- and post-test performance on the oral fluency subscale of the Oral Proficiency Test. Table 5 summarizes the results.

Table 5. Paired-Sample t-Test results for oral fluency (N = 35).

Measure	Mean (Pre)	SD (Pre)	Mean (Post)	SD (Post)	t(34)	p	η^2 (Effect Size)
Oral Fluency Score (Max = 10)	5.21	1.18	7.86	1.09	9.74	< .001	0.73

The results in Table 5 show a clear improvement in students' oral fluency after participating in structured immersion activities. This suggests that activities based on real-life communication and interactive practice helped students speak Arabic more smoothly and with greater confidence.

5.5. Contribution of Structured Language Immersion Activities to Oral Proficiency

The results of this study clearly indicate that the Structured Language Immersion Activities had a substantial impact on the development of oral proficiency among non-native Arabic-speaking students. The significant improvements observed in overall oral proficiency scores, as well as in each of the three sub-dimensions: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency, can be directly linked to the thoughtful design and implementation of the program.

The indoor activities provided a controlled and instruction-rich environment where students could engage in structured dialogues, vocabulary workshops, and role-playing scenarios. These tasks allowed learners to repeatedly practice accurate grammatical structures, expand their lexical repertoire, and respond spontaneously in Arabic. The use of peer-facilitated conversations with native speakers further enhanced students' confidence and provided immediate corrective feedback, which is critical for consolidating learning and reducing errors in real-time communication.

At the same time, outdoor immersion activities offered authentic, real-world contexts in which students could apply their language skills beyond the classroom. Tasks such as interacting with staff, completing service-related inquiries, participating in cultural walks, and engaging in storytelling circles created meaningful communicative situations. These activities not only strengthened structural competence and vocabulary breadth but also promoted oral fluency by encouraging learners to communicate spontaneously and adaptively, mirroring the demands of natural language use.

A key feature of the program was its integration and sequencing, which allowed learners to gradually progress from simpler tasks to more complex communicative challenges. This scaffolding, combined with continuous support from the instructional team and native facilitators, created a safe yet stimulating environment where students could experiment with language, receive guidance, and internalize linguistic structures more effectively.

The statistically significant gains in the pre- and post-test scores confirm that such structured and interactive immersion experiences are highly effective for enhancing all dimensions of oral proficiency. Students were able to internalize Arabic structures, broaden their vocabulary, and speak with increased spontaneity and confidence.

The findings of the present study provide compelling evidence that structured language immersion activities significantly enhance the oral proficiency of non-native Arabic-speaking students across all three targeted dimensions: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency.

The structured nature of the intervention, combining indoor and outdoor learning environments, allowed students to engage in meaningful, context-rich communicative experiences, which is consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of immersive and interactive learning for second language acquisition (Blyth, 2018; Ismail, 2022; Saighi, 2025).

In terms of structural competence, students demonstrated substantial improvement in their ability to produce grammatically accurate sentences and correctly structured expressions in real communicative contexts. The guided dialogues, role-playing scenarios, and scaffolded exercises within indoor sessions provided repeated opportunities to internalize sentence patterns and grammatical rules, aligning with recommendations for targeted practice in immersion-based language programs (Khemis, 2025; Mansour, 2021). Outdoor tasks, such as real-world interactions and campus-based language missions, further reinforced these structures in authentic settings, promoting both accuracy and functional use.

Regarding vocabulary breadth, the structured activities enabled students to expand their lexical repertoire significantly. Thematic vocabulary workshops, semantic-mapping exercises, and rapid-recall games helped students actively retrieve, comprehend, and use a wider range of words, particularly high-frequency terms necessary for daily and academic interactions.

Outdoor cultural exploration walks and authentic communicative tasks provided additional exposure to contextually relevant vocabulary, supporting the principle that meaningful interaction in immersive settings accelerates lexical acquisition more effectively than rote memorization or isolated drills (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; El-Din Samir & Haidara, 2025; Soleha et al., 2024).

Oral fluency also improved markedly, as evidenced by students' enhanced ability to speak spontaneously, maintain communication flow, and respond appropriately in real-life scenarios. Activities such as peer-facilitated conversations, storytelling circles, and real-world language challenges allowed learners to practice speaking in dynamic, low-anxiety environments, promoting confidence and automaticity in language production (Morales, 2025; Porter & Castillo, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021). The combination of immediate feedback from native facilitators and gradual progression from simple to complex tasks further strengthened learners' ability to communicate effectively in authentic situations.

The results underscore that Structured Language Immersion Activities create an environment in which learners can simultaneously develop grammatical accuracy, lexical richness, and communicative fluency. This holistic approach aligns with prior evidence demonstrating that carefully sequenced immersion experiences, which integrate classroom instruction with authentic social interaction, produce meaningful gains in oral proficiency among language learners (Huang et al., 2025; Nicolaidou et al., 2023; Weng et al., 2024). By providing repeated, scaffolded, and contextually grounded opportunities to engage with Arabic, the intervention enabled students not only to internalize linguistic forms but also to apply them effectively in practical communication, bridging the gap between formal language instruction and real-world use.

6. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that carefully designed Structured Language Immersion Activities are a highly effective approach for fostering oral proficiency among non-native Arabic-speaking students. By integrating both indoor and

outdoor learning environments, the program provided learners with meaningful, interactive, and culturally rich experiences that promoted sustained engagement with the Arabic language.

The findings clearly indicate that the intervention contributed to significant improvements across all three dimensions of oral proficiency: structural competence, vocabulary breadth, and oral fluency. Students were able to construct grammatically accurate sentences, expand their lexical repertoire, and communicate more fluently in authentic situations. The combination of guided dialogues, thematic vocabulary exercises, role-playing scenarios, peer-facilitated discussions, and real-world communicative tasks created a holistic and immersive learning environment that supported progressive skill development.

These results underscore the value of structured immersion as a pedagogical strategy that goes beyond rote memorization or isolated classroom drills. The program carefully sequenced activities that allowed learners to internalize linguistic structures, apply new vocabulary meaningfully, and build confidence in spontaneous oral communication.

This aligns with prior research emphasizing that immersive, contextually grounded experiences accelerate language acquisition and enhance learners' ability to use the target language effectively. The study confirms that Structured Language Immersion Activities offer a robust framework for enhancing oral proficiency, equipping students with the linguistic tools and communicative competence necessary to thrive academically, socially, and culturally in Arabic-speaking environments.

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Transparency: The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

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