

Foreign Language Anxiety and the Reorientation of Self-Confidence in Students Through the Fun Al-Lughawy Program

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Abstract

Foreign language anxiety is a significant barrier to effective language learning, often hindering students' motivation and academic performance. This study explores the perspectives of students (santri) in the Fun al-Lughawy program, aiming to assess the program's effectiveness in reducing foreign language anxiety and enhancing self-confidence. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were gathered through observations, interviews, and document analysis. The study was guided by Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Anxiety theory (1986), which identifies three types of anxiety: communication anxiety, test anxiety, and anxiety due to negative perceptions. The findings reveal that the Fun al-Lughawy program successfully creates a supportive and interactive learning environment, which allows students to practice foreign languages more freely and confidently. This program reduces various forms of anxiety: communication anxiety, test anxiety, and anxiety due to negative perceptions by fostering positive peer interactions and offering opportunities for practice in non-threatening settings. Ultimately, the study concludes that the Fun al-Lughawy program is effective in reducing foreign language anxiety, significantly boosting students' self-confidence, and enhancing their active participation in language learning.

Keywords: Foreign Language Anxiety, Self-Confidence, Fun Al-Lughawy

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, foreign language proficiency has become one of the most essential skills¹. However, it is not uncommon for individuals to experience foreign language anxiety, a common social phenomenon that occurs when someone feels pressured or fearful when using a language that is not their native tongue. This anxiety

¹ Frully Zulfania Arrahma et al., 'Kesadaran Mahasiswa Bahasa Asing Akan Pentingnya Berbicara Bahasa Inggris', *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia* 3, no. 1 (2022): 34–42, <https://doi.org/10.59141/japendi.v3i01.505>.

can arise in various situations, ranging from everyday conversations, public speaking presentations, to taking exams. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is not only experienced by students, but also by professionals who must communicate in foreign languages at their workplace. This phenomenon poses a significant challenge for language learners as it can hinder their ability to learn and use the language effectively.

In Indonesia, the phenomenon of foreign language anxiety is highly relevant, considering that English and other foreign languages are mandatory subjects in many educational institutions². Despite this, many students feel anxious when they have to speak or write in a foreign language³. Factors such as a lack of practice, ineffective teaching methods, and insufficient emotional support often exacerbate this anxiety. This situation is further worsened by an environment that does not actively support the use of foreign languages in daily life, leading many students to eventually feel insecure about their language abilities⁴.

The phenomenon of foreign language learning in Indonesia shows a gap between the need for foreign language proficiency and the reality on the ground. The education system, which still tends to focus more on memorization and grammar rather than practical communication, is one of the main causes⁵. Many students feel they lack opportunities to practice speaking and listening actively, which are essential components in mastering a language⁶. This leads to many students feeling unprepared and anxious when they have to communicate in a foreign language outside the classroom.

In addition, the education policy in Indonesia, which places foreign languages as mandatory subjects, is often not accompanied by the provision of adequate resources. Language teachers often face challenges such as large class sizes, limited teaching materials, and a lack of professional training. As a result, foreign language learning is often ineffective and adds to the burden on students. This situation calls for innovation in

² Yuslaili Ningsih et al., 'Pelatihan Presentasi Berbahasa Inggris Kepada Siswa Pondok Muslimah Syamila Jember', *SABAJAYA: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, no. 3 (2023): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.59561/sabajaya.v1i3.79>.

³ Muhammad Ivan Alfian et al., 'Kecemasan Berbahasa Untuk Ketrampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Pada Tingkat Perguruan Tinggi', *Arabia: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 14, no. 1 (2022): 53–70, <http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/arabia.v14i1.14887>.

⁴ I. Putu Yoga Purandina, 'Kecemasan Berbahasa Asing Anak Sekolah Dasar Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris', *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar* 3, no. 1 (2022): 27–36, <https://doi.org/10.55115/edukasi.v3i1.2297>.

⁵ Reynathal Beatrix and Rahmah Hastut, 'KECEMASAN DALAM MEMPELAJARI BAHASA ASING PADA SISWA SMA DI TORAJA', *Jurnal Psikologi Malahayat* 4, no. 2 (2022): 141–50.

⁶ Arif Widagdo, 'FAKTOR PSIKOLOGIS SISWA/MAHASISWA DALAM PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA ASING: SEBUAH DILEMA BAGI PENGAJAR BAHASA INGGRIS', *Kreatif: Jurnal Kependidikan Dasar* 11, no. 1 (2020): 28–38, <https://doi.org/10.15294/kreatif.v11i1.25958>.

teaching methods and a more holistic approach to address foreign language anxiety among students.

The *Fun al-Lughawy* program at Mahad Sunan Ampel Al Aly UIN Malang emerges as one of the solutions to address foreign language anxiety. This program is designed to create an enjoyable and interactive learning environment, enabling students (*mahasantri*) to learn and understand foreign languages (Arabic and English) with more confidence⁷. Through creative and supportive teaching methods, this program aims to reduce the pressure often felt by students when learning a foreign language. With a more humanistic approach focused on language use in real-life contexts, *Fun al-Lughawy* seeks to enhance the language skills of students comprehensively.

The issues surrounding foreign language learning in Indonesia can be linked to the Foreign Language Anxiety theory proposed by Horwitz and Cope. This theory identifies three types of related anxiety: communicative anxiety, test anxiety, and anxiety related to negative perceptions⁸. Communicative anxiety arises when students feel afraid to speak in public due to the fear of making mistakes or being mocked by others. Test anxiety occurs when students feel anxious about taking language exams, worried that they won't be able to demonstrate their abilities effectively. Meanwhile, anxiety related to negative perceptions arises when students feel judged poorly by others, whether by teachers, classmates, or even family, regarding their foreign language proficiency.

Foreign language anxiety has been a central focus of educational research due to its significant impact on language acquisition, affecting both the motivation and academic performance of students. Several previous studies have extensively explored the psychological and social factors contributing to FLA and its adverse effects on learners. Fitriani highlighted that students' reluctance to speak in English classes often stems from a lack of confidence in their own linguistic abilities⁹. The study identified key causes of this reluctance, including fear of negative evaluation from peers, concerns about being judged or compared unfavorably to classmates, and the fear of making mistakes in public. These findings suggest that FLA in language learning contexts is more profoundly rooted in social and psychological factors rather than a mere lack of interest or intrinsic

⁷ Hamdi Atiqurrahman and Nuril Mufidah, 'Kegiatan Fun Luhgawi Berbasis Metode Belajar Ibnu Sina', *Ma'arif Journal of Education, Madrasah Innovation and Aswaja Studies* 2, no. 1 (2023): 25–28.

⁸ Abdul Basith, 'Kecemasan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Siswa Program Intensif Bahasa Arab', *TADRIS AL-ARABIYAT: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 2 (2021): 264–80, <https://doi.org/10.30739/arabiyat.v1i02.1191>.

⁹ Ely Fitriani et al., 'Studi Kasus: Kecemasan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris Sebagai Bahasa Asing', *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 2 (2022): 2312–22, <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i2.2187>.

motivation to learn the language.

Similarly, study by Fathma and Safiruddin revealed that FLA has a detrimental effect on students' academic performance and self-confidence, particularly when it comes to speaking Arabic¹⁰. Their study demonstrated that anxiety related to speaking a foreign language led to avoidance behaviors, diminished classroom participation, and increased levels of stress, all of which ultimately reduced academic achievement. The anxiety experienced by students often manifests as test anxiety, communicative anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation, which can interfere with their ability to successfully communicate and demonstrate language proficiency.

In a broader context, a study by Nurul et al., investigated the impact of FLA on prospective early childhood education teachers¹¹. The study identified eight key indicators that influence FLA, which were categorized into three main factors: personal psychological factors (e.g., fear of making mistakes, low self-esteem), cognitive factors (e.g., fear of forgetting language material), and environmental factors (e.g., lack of support in the learning environment). Personal psychological factors were found to be the most dominant, underscoring the importance of addressing learners' emotional and psychological barriers in order to enhance their foreign language proficiency. These findings suggest that FLA is a multifaceted issue that requires comprehensive interventions aimed at improving both the emotional and cognitive aspects of language learning.

Despite the growing body of research on the causes and consequences of FLA, there remains a need for effective strategies to mitigate anxiety and enhance language learning outcomes. In response to this need, various interventions have been proposed, including changes to the learning environment, increased emotional support, and more interactive, engaging language instruction. One such innovative approach is the Fun al-Lughawy program at Mahad Sunan Ampel Al Aly UIN Malang, which was specifically designed to address FLA by creating a supportive, interactive, and enjoyable learning environment. The program aims to reduce the psychological barriers to language learning through activities that encourage active participation, reduce the fear of negative evaluation, and promote positive peer interactions. By emphasizing social interaction and creating a non-threatening atmosphere, the program seeks to foster students' confidence and enhance

¹⁰ Fathma Zahara Sholeha and Safiruddin Al Baqi, 'KECEMASAN PESERTA DIDIK DALAM PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA ARAB', *MAHIRA: Journal of Arabic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2022): 1–12.

¹¹ Nurrul Az Zahra et al., 'Kecemasan Berbahasa Asing Pada Calon Pendidik Anak Usia Dini', *Murhum: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 4, no. 1 (2023): 335–48.

their foreign language skills.

This research aims to fill the gap in the literature regarding strategies for reducing foreign language anxiety among students, particularly in the context of innovative learning programs such as *Fun al-Lughawy*. The study seeks to explore the perspectives of students (*mahasantri*) regarding foreign language anxiety within the *Fun al-Lughawy* program at Mahad Sunan Ampel Al Aly UIN Malang, as well as assess how this program can help reduce anxiety and boost students' self-confidence. The study also identifies key factors that contribute to the success of the program, providing recommendations for the development of similar programs in the future. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of more effective and supportive foreign language teaching methods in Indonesia.

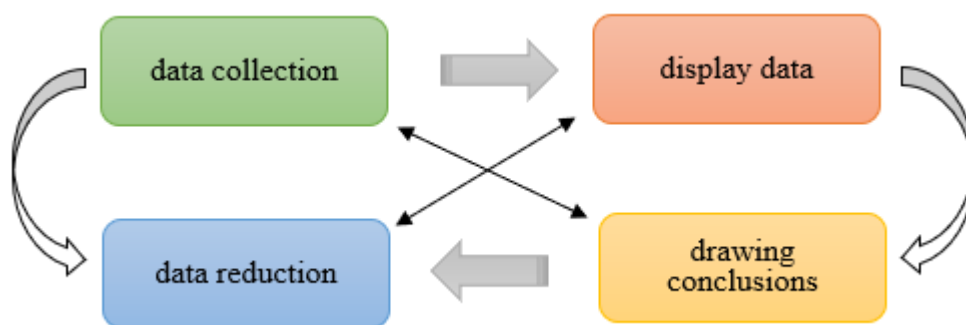
Method

This research employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore foreign language anxiety (FLA) among students involved in the *Fun al-Lughawy* program at Mahad Sunan Ampel Al Aly UIN Malang. This approach is chosen to address gaps in existing research by focusing on the specific context of an innovative language program designed to mitigate FLA. Primary data is collected through direct observation and in-depth interviews with three students (*mahasantri*) and two instructors (*musyrif*) from the Al-Muhasibi building during the 2023/2024 academic year. The observation aims to examine how the program's teaching methods are implemented, the level of student participation, and the nature of social interactions that occur within the program. Interviews are conducted to explore participants' experiences and perceptions of foreign language anxiety, particularly regarding the effectiveness of the teaching methods applied in the program. The study also utilizes secondary data from relevant articles, books, and literature, providing additional context and supporting theories on FLA.

The data analysis follows the Miles and Huberman model, which involves data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions based on strong evidence. Data reduction filters out irrelevant information, focusing on key themes related to FLA. Data display involves presenting the findings through descriptive narratives that clarify the role of the *Fun al-Lughawy* program in reducing anxiety. Finally, conclusions are drawn by verifying the data to ensure reliability. This methodology fills a gap in the existing research by exploring the specific context of the *Fun al-Lughawy* program and its effectiveness in mitigating FLA, offering a new perspective compared to previous studies that mainly

focus on generic language learning environments.

Figure 1. Data Collection Techniques Miles And Huberman



Result and Discussion

Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is a psychological phenomenon often experienced by language learners, including students (*mahasantri*). According to Horwitz and Cope, this anxiety can be divided into three main types: communication anxiety, test anxiety, and anxiety related to negative perceptions¹². Communication anxiety arises when someone fears speaking in public or in social situations using a foreign language. Test anxiety occurs when individuals feel anxious about facing evaluations or language proficiency tests. Meanwhile, anxiety related to negative perceptions is associated with the fear of being judged poorly by others. To understand how this anxiety affects students in learning foreign languages, interviews were conducted with participants and organizers of the *Fun al-Lughawy* program.

1. Communicative anxiety

Communicative anxiety is the discomfort or fear experienced by an individual when they have to speak or communicate in a foreign language. According to Horwitz and Cope, this anxiety often arises in situations where individuals feel insecure about their language abilities, worry about making mistakes, or fear negative judgment from others¹³. These factors can hinder one's ability to speak and interact in a foreign language, thus

¹² Izzatunnisa Fadhilah, 'Faktor Kecemasan Siswa Dalam Berbicara Bahasa Inggris Pada Mahasiswa Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta', *Indonesian Research Journal on Education* 2, no. 1 (2022): 96–105, <https://doi.org/10.31004/irje.v2i1.248>.

¹³ Alberth Alberth, 'Potensi Teknik Pembelajaran Kooperatif Berbantu Whatsapp Untuk Mengurangi Kecemasan Siswa Dalam Berbicara Bahasa Inggris', *LINGUA SUSASTRA* 4, no. 1 (2023): 84–101, <https://doi.org/10.24036/ls.v4i1.176>.

reducing the effectiveness of communication. Communicative anxiety can be caused by a lack of experience in speaking the language, social pressure, and high expectations from oneself or others. This condition often makes individuals reluctant to participate in conversations or activities involving the use of a foreign language, which ultimately can impede the development of their language skills.

From the interviews conducted, several students expressed feelings of anxiety and nervousness when they had to use a foreign language before participating in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program. For example, Muhamad Samdya stated that he felt anxious if he couldn't use Arabic well, fearing he wouldn't be able to follow the material and conversations in the language. Adhitya Ramdani Zuhdy also felt nervous and anxious due to his lack of proficiency in foreign languages, especially when having to speak in public or in formal situations. Muhamad Nasirudin had difficulty in listening to and understanding English conversations, which made him feel anxious and pressured when he had to respond in the language. After participating in the program, most students felt more confident. Adhitya mentioned that the program was very helpful in boosting optimism in using foreign languages as it provided many opportunities to practice and learn in a supportive environment.

The communicative anxiety experienced by the students can be linked to feelings of insecurity about their foreign language abilities. The *Fun al-Lughawy* Program appears to be effective in addressing this anxiety through an interactive and enjoyable approach, which helps the students feel more comfortable speaking and using foreign languages. Activities such as memorization, conversation practice, and communication in a supportive environment, as mentioned by the instructors, provide opportunities for the students to practice and improve their language skills without fear of negative judgment.

Instructor Adi Nugroho Sujatmiko mentioned that an approach focused on enjoyment and social interaction is highly effective in reducing anxiety and boosting students' confidence. Wahbah Zuchayly added that practicing together and memorizing in groups helps students feel more confident because they know they are not alone in facing these challenges.

Table 1. Findings of Communicative Anxiety

Informant	Type of Communicative Anxiety	Causing Factors	Changes After the <i>Fun al-Lughawy</i> Program
MS	Anxious about not being able to use Arabic well	Lack of self-confidence, fear of not being able to follow material & conversations	Feels more confident, helped by frequent practice in a fun environment
ARZ	Nervous & anxious when speaking in public/formal situations	Lack of proficiency in foreign languages	Program boosts optimism & self-confidence, feels braver to speak
MS	Difficulty understanding English conversations & anxious when responding	Limited listening and speaking skills	More trained & less pressured after repeated practice in groups
MNS (Instructor)	Instructor's observation	Learning environment often makes students afraid of making mistakes	States that interactive & enjoyable approaches effectively reduce anxiety
MWZ (Instructor)	Instructor's observation	Students feel burdened	States that group practice & memorization

		when studying alone	together boost confidence
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The findings above indicate that the communicative anxiety experienced by the students aligns with the theory of Horwitz and Cope, which emphasizes that lack of self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and social pressure are dominant factors that influence the ability to communicate in a foreign language. The *Fun al-Lughawy* program has proven to reduce anxiety levels by providing a supportive, interactive, and enjoyable learning environment. Approaches such as group practice, memorization together, and support from instructors and peers create a sense of psychological safety. This is consistent with Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, which suggests that lowering emotional barriers (anxiety, fear, pressure) will enhance language acquisition more effectively¹⁴. Therefore, the success of this program underscores the importance of experiential learning strategies to overcome communicative anxiety.

2. Test anxiety

Test anxiety is a form of anxiety experienced by individuals when facing evaluation or test situations in a foreign language¹⁵. According to Horwitz and Cope, this anxiety arises because individuals worry about not meeting expected standards, making mistakes, or failing to demonstrate their language abilities effectively. Test anxiety can hinder performance and affect test results, as well as lower motivation to study. This anxiety is often exacerbated by pressure to succeed, expectations from parents and teachers, and comparisons with peers. In the context of learning a foreign language, test anxiety can cause individuals to feel insecure, struggle to concentrate, and tend to avoid evaluative situations. The long-term impact of unresolved test anxiety can include a decline in academic performance and a continuous decrease in learning motivation.

Some students revealed that they feel anxious in foreign language evaluation situations. AdiNugroho Sujatmiko, an instructor, stated that a common pattern of anxiety among students is related to uncertainty about their language abilities and the fear of making mistakes. Specific situations, such as exams or evaluations, as well as direct interactions with native speakers, can worsen the anxiety. For example, Muhamad

¹⁴ Mehak Jawed et al., 'Exploring the Connection between Presence and Absence of Krashen's Theory on Learner's Input and Affective Filters: A Triangulation Approach', *Journal of Arts and Linguistics Studies* 3, no. 2 (2025): 1811–39, <https://doi.org/10.71281/jals.v3i2.305>.

¹⁵ Dhian Kusumastuti, 'Kecemasan Dan Prestasi Akademik Pada Mahasiswa', *Analitika: Jurnal Magister Psikologi* 12, no. 1 (2020): 22–33, <https://doi.org/10.31289/analitika.v12i1.3110>.

Samdya stated that he often feels pressured when taking Arabic language tests because he worries he won't answer correctly. Adhitya Ramdani Zuhdy admitted that exams make him very nervous because he's afraid he can't demonstrate his best abilities. However, the methods used in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program, such as practice and memorization together, as well as the approach focusing on fun and social interaction, help reduce this anxiety. Wahbah Zuchayly, another instructor, mentioned that activities involving repetitive practice and group support make students feel more prepared and confident when facing tests.

The test anxiety experienced by students before participating in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program shows that uncertainty and fear of negative evaluation play a significant role in increasing their anxiety. The program's approach, which focuses on group practice and social interaction, helps reduce the pressure felt by students during evaluations. For example, group memorization activities help students feel more comfortable because they can learn together and support each other. Additionally, the focus on making learning fun, as mentioned by Adi Nugroho Sujatmiko, makes the learning process more enjoyable and less stressful. Wahbah Zuchayly also emphasized the importance of repeated practice and support from peers and instructors, which helps students feel more prepared and confident when facing tests.

Table 2. Findings of Test Anxiety

Informant	Type of Test Anxiety	Causing Factors	Changes After the <i>Fun al-Lughawy</i> Program
MS	Feels pressured during the Arabic test due to fear of answering incorrectly	Uncertainty about language abilities & fear of negative evaluation	More confident after group practice and group support

ARZ	Nervous and afraid of not demonstrating his best abilities during the exam	Pressure to succeed & fear of failure	Program made him feel more prepared, calm, and optimistic facing the test
ANS (Instructor)	Instructor's observation	Uncertainty about language abilities & fear of making mistakes	Emphasizes that enjoyable and interactive approaches help reduce anxiety
WZ (Instructor)	Instructor's observation	Students feel pressured when studying alone without support	States that repeated practice and group learning increase readiness and confidence

The findings above show that test anxiety is closely related to evaluative pressure and fear of negative judgment, as discussed by Horwitz and Cope. Students tend to feel nervous, insecure, and pressured when facing foreign language tests due to the fear of not meeting expected standards. This pressure is further exacerbated by external factors such as expectations from teachers or parents, as well as comparisons with peers.

The *Fun al-Lughawy* program successfully reduced this anxiety by providing a collaborative and enjoyable learning environment. Repetitive practice, group memorization activities, and emotional support from instructors and peers helped students become mentally more prepared. This aligns with Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, which emphasizes that affective factors such as anxiety must be minimized to enhance language acquisition¹⁶. Thus, the success of this program demonstrates that learning strategies based on social practice, interaction, and emotional support can significantly reduce test anxiety and improve students' confidence when facing foreign language evaluations.

¹⁶ Xiaokun Liu, 'The Effect of Affective Filter Hypothesis on College Students' English Writing Teaching and Its Enlightenment', *OALib* 10, no. 09 (2023): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110671>.

3. Negative perception anxiety

Negative perception anxiety is the worry experienced by individuals about how they are viewed by others when using a foreign language. According to Horwitz and Cope, this anxiety often arises because individuals fear being perceived as less competent or making embarrassing mistakes¹⁷. Concerns about negative perceptions from peers, teachers, or native speakers can hinder active participation and interaction in a foreign language. Individuals experiencing negative perception anxiety may avoid speaking in a foreign language in public or social situations, opting to remain silent or communicate as little as possible to avoid potential negative judgment. This can affect the development of their language skills due to the lack of practice and active participation.

In interviews, several students mentioned concerns about how they are perceived when using a foreign language. Wahbah Zuchayly, an instructor, stated that some students feel embarrassed and insecure due to their accent and pronunciation when speaking English. Muhamad Samdya also mentioned that he often worries about how others will judge his ability to speak Arabic, fearing mistakes that might be seen as embarrassing. Adhitya Ramdani Zuhdy stated that nervousness often arises from the fear of being ridiculed or seen as incompetent by his peers. However, through support from instructors and peers, as well as the program's approach focused on fun and social interaction, students become more confident in using a foreign language. Activities such as group practice, language games, and conversation simulations in the program help reduce the fear of negative judgment, as expressed by Wahbah Zuchayly.

The negative perception anxiety experienced by students before participating in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program shows that the fear of negative judgment can hinder their participation in foreign language activities. This program, with its fun and interactive approach, helps reduce this anxiety by creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment. Wahbah Zuchayly stated that teaching methods that emphasize social interaction and fun in learning are highly effective in reducing this anxiety. Support from instructors and peers, as well as opportunities to practice in real-life situations, such as conversation simulations and role-playing games, help students feel more comfortable and confident in using foreign languages.

¹⁷ Iwan Fauzi et al., 'Mengatasi Anxiety Dalam Berbicara Bahasa Inggris Melalui Pembelajaran Berbasis Web', *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana*, 2022, 550–56.

Table 3. Findings of Negative Perception Anxiety

Informant	Type of Negative Perception Anxiety	Causin g Factors	Changes After the <i>Fun al-Lughawy</i> Program
WZ (Instructor)	Students feel embarrassed & insecure due to their English accent/pronunciation	Fear of being perceived as less competent, worried about being ridiculed	States that group practice, language games, & conversation simulations made students more confident
MS	Worried about being negatively judged when speaking Arabic, afraid mistakes will be embarrassing	Fear of negative judgment from others	Became more confident after receiving support from instructors & having opportunities to practice in a fun environment
ARZ	Nervous due to fear of being ridiculed or seen as incompetent by peers	Social pressure & comparison with peers	Group support & interactive approaches made him more comfortable speaking
ANS (Instructor)	Instructor's observation	Students afraid of making	Emphasize s the importance of positive feedback

		mistakes receiving negative feedback	&	& a friendly classroom atmosphere to reduce shame
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These findings confirm that negative perception anxiety is closely related to psychosocial factors, specifically how individuals feel they are judged by others when using a foreign language. Horwitz and Cope explain that the fear of being seen as incompetent or making embarrassing mistakes can limit active participation in the language learning process. This is reflected in the experiences of students who tend to feel nervous, ashamed, and even choose to remain silent in order to avoid the risk of negative judgment.

The *Fun al-Lughawy* program has proven effective in reducing this anxiety through interactive approaches, language games, conversation simulations, and fun-based learning. A key supporting factor is the non-judgmental atmosphere and the support from both peers and instructors, which encourages students to take risks and practice speaking without the fear of making mistakes. This strategy aligns with the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, which emphasizes that errors are not failures but rather an integral part of the learning process¹⁸. Furthermore, the role of positive feedback, as emphasized by Adi Nugroho Sujatmiko, is also crucial in building the students' self-efficacy. With positive reinforcement and a friendly environment, negative perception anxiety is reduced, while the willingness to participate increases. This condition supports the optimal development of foreign language skills, as students practice in a safe, interactive environment with stronger intrinsic motivation.

Based on the analysis of the interview results and Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Anxiety theory, it can be concluded that the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program is effective in reducing various forms of foreign language anxiety experienced by students. The program successfully decreased communicative anxiety, test anxiety, and negative perception anxiety through an interactive, enjoyable, and supportive approach. Through activities that focus on practice, social interaction, and group support, students became more confident and comfortable in using foreign languages.

¹⁸ Ya-Yu Cloudia Ho, 'Communicative Language Teaching and English as a Foreign Language Undergraduates' Communicative Competence in Tourism English', *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education* 27 (November 2020): 100271, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2020.100271>.

The Role of Teaching Methods in Overcoming Foreign Language Anxiety

Teaching methods play a crucial role in overcoming foreign language anxiety. Approaches that are interactive, enjoyable, and focus on active participation can help reduce anxiety and boost students' confidence in using a foreign language¹⁹. Horwitz and Cope emphasized that supportive and non-judgmental teaching methods are essential for creating a conducive learning environment. In such an environment, students feel safe to experiment with new languages, make mistakes without the fear of being ridiculed or criticized, and receive constructive feedback from both teachers and peers. Effective teaching methods in reducing anxiety also include the use of varied and engaging techniques, such as role-playing, group discussions, and simulations, all of which provide students with opportunities to use the language in real-life contexts²⁰.

The teaching methods used in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program involve various activities designed to reduce anxiety and improve the language skills of the students (*mahasantri*). For example, Muhamad Samdya states that the memorization methods taught by the *musyrif* are very helpful in understanding and mastering the Arabic language. Adhitya Ramdani Zuhdy mentions that the methods of writing and memorizing vocabulary make learning the language easier and more enjoyable. Wahbah Zuchayly emphasizes the importance of group practice and social interaction in reducing anxiety and boosting the students' confidence. Additionally, methods that encourage active participation and provide opportunities to practice in real-life situations, such as conversation simulations and role-playing games, are considered highly effective. Adi Nugroho Sujatmiko highlights that an approach focused on making language learning fun, through language games and interactive activities, helps students feel more comfortable and enjoy the learning process.

The teaching methods used in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program appear to be highly effective in addressing foreign language anxiety. Interactive and enjoyable approaches, such as group memorization, conversation practice, and language games, help students feel more comfortable and confident in using a foreign language. For instance, the

¹⁹ Osman Özdemir and Hümset Seçkin, 'Exploring Foreign Language Anxiety in Higher Education: Multifaceted Insights into Causes, Impacts, and Coping Strategies', *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 11 (2025): 101364, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101364>.

²⁰ Afsheen Rezaei et al., 'Implementing Active Learning Approach to Promote Motivation, Reduce Anxiety, and Shape Positive Attitudes: A Case Study of EFL Learners', *Acta Psychologica* 253 (March 2025): 104704, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.104704>.

memorization method taught by the instructor enables students to understand and master the material deeply, reducing the fear of making mistakes. Adhitya Ramdani Zuhdy also notes that the method of writing and memorizing vocabulary provides a clear structure and helps enhance language skills in an organized and systematic manner.

Wahbah Zuchayly emphasizes that group practice and social interaction allow students to share experiences, support each other, and learn from one another's mistakes, all of which contribute to reducing anxiety. Adi Nugroho Sujatmiko states that teaching methods focused on social interaction and the enjoyment of learning are highly effective in reducing anxiety and improving the language skills of the students. A non-judgmental and supportive approach, where mistakes are seen as part of the learning process, helps students feel more confident and motivated to continue learning. This aligns with the theory of Horwitz and Cope, which asserts that supportive and non-judgmental teaching methods can help reduce foreign language anxiety and increase active participation in foreign language learning. Therefore, the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program has successfully created a conducive learning environment where students feel safe to experiment, practice, and improve their language skills without fear or anxiety.

Table 4. The Teaching Method of *Fun Al-Lughawy*

Informant	Method/Strategy Emphasized	Impact on Students
MS	Memorization method taught by musyrif	Helps in understanding & mastering Arabic, reduces the fear of making mistakes
ARZ	Writing & memorizing vocabulary	Makes learning easier, more enjoyable, and enhances language structure & skills
WZ (Instructor)	Group practice & social interaction	Reduces anxiety, boosts confidence, encourages peer support

ANS (Instructor)	Fun-based activities: language games, simulations, social interaction	Helps students feel comfortable, motivated, and enjoy the learning process
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The findings above emphasize that teaching methods play a central role in overcoming foreign language anxiety. According to Horwitz and Cope, supportive, non-judgmental, and interactive teaching approaches are capable of creating a conducive learning environment, allowing students to take risks in using the language without the fear of being ridiculed or criticized.

The *Fun al-Lughawy* program proves this by implementing a variety of strategies, such as group memorization, vocabulary writing, language games, group discussions, and conversation simulations. This approach aligns with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes the use of language in real-life contexts and views mistakes as a natural part of the learning process²¹. In addition to improving language skills, this method also has a positive psychological effect, reducing anxiety and increasing self-confidence. A key supporting factor is the collaborative and enjoyable environment, where the musyrif plays an important role in providing positive feedback and creating a safe classroom atmosphere. Therefore, the teaching methods in this program are not only effective in reducing affective barriers but also strengthen motivation and active participation among students.

Implications of the Study

This study reveals several important implications for foreign language teaching, particularly in the context of higher education. Based on the findings from interviews and the analysis of the results, the following are the main implications that can be drawn:

1. Implementation of Supportive and Interactive Teaching Methods

The findings of this study indicate that interactive and supportive teaching methods, such as those applied in the *Fun al-Lughawy* Program, can significantly reduce foreign language anxiety among students. Educational institutions and instructors are encouraged to adopt teaching approaches that focus on active and enjoyable participation, which can create a more conducive learning environment and support the development of

²¹ Kazi Imran Hossain, 'Literature-Based Language Learning: Challenges, and Opportunities for English Learners', *Ampersand* 13 (December 2024): 100201, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amper.2024.100201>.

language skills. The use of techniques such as role-play, group discussions, and simulations can provide students with opportunities to use the language in real-life contexts and reduce the fear of making mistakes.

2. The Importance of Social Support in Language Teaching

This study highlights the importance of social support from peers and instructors in overcoming foreign language anxiety. Students who feel supported by their social environment are more likely to be confident and comfortable in using a foreign language. Therefore, foreign language teaching programs should incorporate collaborative elements that allow students to support one another and learn from each other. This can take the form of group activities, peer tutoring, or active language learning communities.

3. Non-Judgmental Approach in Providing Feedback

The findings suggest that positive and non-judgmental feedback can help reduce foreign language anxiety. Instructors should avoid overly harsh criticism and focus on providing constructive and supportive feedback. This will help students feel safer to practice and make mistakes, which is an essential part of the learning process. As a result, students can focus more on improving their language skills without the fear of negative judgment.

4. Integrating Fun Activities into Language Learning

Fun activities focused on social interaction, such as language games and conversation simulations, have proven effective in reducing anxiety and improving students' language skills. Educational institutions and instructors should integrate these elements into foreign language teaching curricula. Enjoyable activities can enhance student motivation and make the learning process more engaging and challenging.

5. Building Confidence Through Practice and Repetition

Repetitive practice and structured exercises can enhance students' confidence in using a foreign language. Language teaching programs should provide ample opportunities for repeated practice in various contexts, both individually and in groups. Methods such as memorization, writing, and repeated conversations can help students internalize material and feel more confident in their usage.

6. Teaching Methods Tailored to Individual Needs

Each student has different levels of anxiety and learning needs. Therefore, instructors must be flexible and able to adjust teaching methods to meet the individual needs of students. This study implies that a personalized approach and special attention to students with high anxiety can be highly beneficial. Instructors should be sensitive to signs of anxiety and be prepared to offer additional support when necessary.

By adopting and implementing these findings, educational institutions and instructors can be more effective in reducing foreign language anxiety among students, boosting their confidence, and encouraging active participation in the language learning process. These implications are not only relevant for teaching Arabic or English but can also be applied to teaching other foreign languages across various educational contexts.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the perspectives of students (*mahasantri*) regarding foreign language anxiety within the *Fun al-Lughawy* program at Mahad Sunan Ampel Al Aly UIN Malang, as well as to assess how the program can help reduce anxiety and boost students' self-confidence. Based on the theory by Horwitz and Cope, this study identified three types of anxiety experienced by students: communication anxiety, test anxiety, and anxiety due to negative perceptions. Before participating in the program, students often felt anxious and lacked confidence, particularly related to the fear of making mistakes and receiving negative judgments from others, which hindered their ability to speak and interact in a foreign language. This anxiety led to avoidance of speaking activities and reduced participation in foreign language classes.

The *Fun al-Lughawy* program effectively addresses these three types of anxiety. The program reduces communication anxiety by creating an interactive and supportive environment, providing students with many opportunities to practice foreign languages in a fun and non-judgmental setting. Test anxiety, which often arises due to fear of evaluations and exams, is alleviated through an approach that emphasizes repeated practice and group support, where students feel more prepared and confident when facing assessments. Additionally, anxiety due to negative perceptions fear of being judged poorly by peers and instructors is addressed through positive support from peers and instructors, as well as a more open atmosphere where mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process. Overall, this study shows that the *Fun al-Lughawy* program is effective in reducing foreign language anxiety and boosting students' self-confidence, in line with

the research objectives of identifying solutions to the three types of anxiety faced by students in foreign language learning.

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