

Investigating the Implementation of Language Learning Strategies in Alleviating Foreign Language Anxiety Among University Students

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Abstract

Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) significantly impacts language acquisition, yet its interplay with Language Learning Strategies (LLS) remains underexplored in the context of Arabic language learning in Indonesian Islamic higher education. This study examines the relationship between FLA and LLS among university students learning Arabic at STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan, Indonesia. In this setting, cultural and religious factors may uniquely influence language anxiety. The research aims to assess the levels of FLA, evaluate the frequency of LLS use, and explore the correlation between these variables. Employing a quantitative descriptive and correlational design, data were collected using Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The study involved 82 students, selected through convenience sampling due to its practicality and accessibility within the institution's academic schedule. Descriptive statistics revealed moderate anxiety levels among participants, with female students reporting slightly higher anxiety than males. Students moderately used most LLS categories but employed compensation strategies less frequently. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -.140$, $p < .05$) between FLA and LLS, suggesting that increased use of LLS is associated with reduced anxiety in Arabic language learning. These findings offer practical implications for educators integrating strategy training to mitigate FLA, particularly in culturally distinct educational contexts.

Abstrak

Kecemasan dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Asing (FLA) secara signifikan memengaruhi penguasaan bahasa, namun hubungannya dengan Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa (LLS) masih kurang dieksplorasi dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di pendidikan tinggi Islam Indonesia. Penelitian ini mengkaji hubungan antara FLA dan LLS di kalangan mahasiswa yang belajar bahasa Arab di STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan, Indonesia. Dalam konteks ini, faktor budaya dan agama dapat memengaruhi kecemasan berbahasa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menilai tingkat FLA, mengevaluasi frekuensi penggunaan LLS, dan mengeksplorasi korelasi antara variabel-variabel tersebut. Menggunakan desain deskriptif kuantitatif dan korelasional, data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (FLCAS) dari Horwitz dan Cope serta *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning* (SILL) dari Oxford. Penelitian ini melibatkan 82 mahasiswa yang dipilih melalui teknik *convenience sampling* karena kepraktisan dan aksesibilitasnya. Statistik deskriptif menunjukkan tingkat kecemasan sedang di kalangan mahasiswa, dengan mahasiswi melaporkan kecemasan yang sedikit lebih tinggi dibandingkan mahasiswa laki-laki. Mahasiswa menggunakan sebagian besar kategori LLS secara sedang, tetapi strategi kompensasi digunakan lebih jarang. Analisis korelasi *Pearson product-moment* menunjukkan adanya korelasi negatif yang signifikan secara statistik ($r = -.140, p < .05$) antara FLA dan LLS, yang menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan penggunaan LLS berhubungan dengan penurunan kecemasan dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab. Temuan ini memberikan implikasi praktis bagi dosen untuk mengintegrasikan pelatihan strategi guna mengurangi FLA, terutama dalam konteks pendidikan yang secara budaya berbeda.

المخلص

القلق من تعلم اللغة الأجنبية يؤثر بشكل كبير على اكتساب اللغة، لكن العلاقة بينه وبين استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة لا تزال غير مدروسة بشكل كافٍ في سياق تعلم اللغة العربية في التعليم الجامعي الإسلامي في إندونيسيا. تقدم هذه الدراسة تحقيقاً جديداً يفحص العلاقة بين القلق من تعلم اللغة الأجنبية واستراتيجيات تعلم اللغة بين طلاب الجامعة الذين يدرسون اللغة العربية في جامعة الياسيني الإسلامية بأسوروان، إندونيسيا. في هذا السياق، قد تؤثر العوامل الثقافية والدينية بشكل فريد على قلق اللغة. تهدف الدراسة إلى تقييم مستويات القلق من تعلم اللغة

الأجنبية، تقييم تكرار استخدام استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة، واستكشاف العلاقة بين هذه المتغيرات. باستخدام تصميم كمي وصفي وارتباطي، تم جمع البيانات باستخدام مقياس قلق تعلم اللغة الأجنبية في الفصول الدراسية لـ Cope و Horwitz، وجرى استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة لـ Oxford. شملت الدراسة ٨٢ طالبًا تم اختيارهم من خلال أخذ العينات العرضية نظرًا لعمليتها وإمكانية الوصول إليها ضمن الجدول الأكاديمي للمؤسسة. كشفت الإحصاءات الوصفية عن مستويات قلق متوسطة بين المشاركين، حيث أبلغت الطالبات عن قلق أعلى قليلاً من الطلاب. استخدم الطلاب معظم فئات LLS بشكل معتدل، لكنهم استخدموا استراتيجيات التعويض بشكل أقل تكرارًا. أظهر تحليل ارتباط بيرسون وجود علاقة سلبية ذات دلالة إحصائية ($r = -0.140, p < 0.05$) بين القلق من تعلم اللغة الأجنبية واستراتيجيات تعلم اللغة، مما يشير إلى أن زيادة استخدام استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة ترتبط بانخفاض القلق في تعلم اللغة العربية. تقدم هذه النتائج آثارًا عملية للمعلمين لدمج التدريب على الاستراتيجيات للتخفيف من القلق من تعلم اللغة الأجنبية، خاصة في السياقات التعليمية المتميزة ثقافيًا.

Keywords: Anxiety; language learning strategies; learning arabic

Introduction

In general terms, anxiety is characterized as a personal experience of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry linked to the activation of the autonomic nervous system.¹ Similarly, MacIntyre and Gardner defined language anxiety as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with contexts involving a second language, such as speaking, listening, and learning".² According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and

¹ Adnan Oflaz, "The Effects of Anxiety, Shyness and Language Learning Strategies on Speaking Skills and Academic Achievement," *European Journal of Educational Research* 8, no. 4 (2019): 999-1011, <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.8.4.999>.

² Peter D. MacIntyre and R. C. Gardner, "The Subtle Effects of Language Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in the Second Language," *Language Learning* 44, no. 2 (1994): 284, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01103.x>.

Cope, Language Anxiety is "a unique combination of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to language learning in the classroom, arising from the distinctive nature of the foreign language learning process".³ In other words, anxiety can stem from feelings of failure and may be alleviated by developing the ability to avoid stressful situations.⁴

Researchers have described that anxiety affects language performance,⁵ language learning,⁶ motivation, and attitudes towards learning specific subjects.⁷ Sanders and Wills describe anxiety as "a complex, multifaceted experience that overwhelms our entire being, impacting various aspects of ourselves".⁸ Wilson observed that learners with higher levels of foreign language anxiety tend to score lower on tests.⁹ Additionally,

³ Elaine K. Horwitz, Michael B. Horwitz, and Joann Cope, "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety," *The Modern Language Journal* 70, no. 2 (1986): 128, <https://doi.org/10.2307/327317>.

⁴ Diana Sanders and Frank Wills, *Counselling for Anxiety Problems* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446219737>; Sumaia Ahmed Aldubaikhi, "Influence of Teacher/Instructor Foreign Language Anxiety Reduction Strategies on Students' Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Saudi Students' English Language Learning in Saudi Arabia," *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 9, no. 2 (2023): 33–44, <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.902004>.

⁵ Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, Phillip Bailey, and Christine E. Daley, "Cognitive, Affective, Personality, and Demographic Predictors of Foreign-Language Achievement," *The Journal of Educational Research* 94, no. 1 (2000): 3–15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220670009598738>.

⁶ Zhao Na, "A Study of High School Students' English Learning Anxiety," *Asian EFL Journal* 9, no. 3 (2007): 22–34; Elaine Horwitz, "Language Anxiety and Achievement," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 21 (2001): 112–26, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190501000071>; Aldubaikhi, "Influence of Teacher/Instructor Foreign Language Anxiety Reduction Strategies on Students' Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Saudi Students' English Language Learning in Saudi Arabia."

⁷ Salim Abu-Rabia, "Teachers' Role, Learners' Gender Differences, and FL Anxiety Among Seventh-Grade Students Studying English as a FL," *Educational Psychology* 24, no. 5 (2004): 711–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144341042000263006>.

⁸ Sanders and Wills, *Counselling for Anxiety Problems*.

⁹ Jean T. Stephenson Wilson, *Anxiety in Learning English as a Foreign Language: Its Associations with Student Variables, with Oral Proficiency, and*

Effiong noted that language learners often feel nervous when speaking near native speakers and experience discomfort and lack of confidence in foreign language classrooms.¹⁰

Foreign language anxiety is distinct from general communication anxiety; while they share similarities like fear of making mistakes and striving for perfection, foreign language anxiety is specifically related to the language learning process. Traditionally, foreign language anxiety is categorized into trait anxiety, situational anxiety, and state anxiety.¹¹ Trait anxiety refers to a stable predisposition to nervousness across various situations, while situational anxiety arises from specific contexts, and state anxiety is temporary. Research indicates that students frequently encounter foreign language anxiety during testing situations.¹²

In foreign language learning, strategies play a crucial role in determining the outcomes of the learning process.¹³ Oxford defined language learning strategies as specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques, such as seeking conversation partners or self-encouragement, used by students to enhance

with Performance on an Oral Test (Ph.D. Diss.) (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2006).

¹⁰ Michael Effiong, *Factors Influencing Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety: An Investigation of English Learners in Four Japanese Universities* (Ph.D. Diss.) (Southampton: University of Southampton, 2013), <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/367372/>.

¹¹ Mohammad Bagher Shabani, "On the Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL Learners," *International Journal of Educational Investigations* 2, no. 2 (2015): 9–23, <http://www.ijeionline.com/index.php/10-ijeionline/36-2015-2>; Anna Stepanovna Borisova et al., "Influence of Foreign Language Anxiety on University Students' Cognitive Processing in English Language Classrooms," *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 10, no. 1 (2024): 299–307, <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.10125>.

¹² Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety."

¹³ Shabani, "On the Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL Learners"; Alwani Alwani, "Istirātījīyāt Ta'lim 'Anāshir al-Lughah wa-al-Mahārāt al-Lughawīyah al-'Arabīyah," *Alsina : Journal of Arabic Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021): 159–80, <https://doi.org/10.21580/alsina.3.2.8592>.

their learning.¹⁴ These strategies serve as tools for active and self-directed improvement in communication skills.¹⁵ Utilizing appropriate strategies is believed to improve proficiency and self-confidence in various contexts.¹⁶

To reduce foreign language anxiety, one effective approach is the use of language learning strategies. Shabani reported that language learning strategies are linked to lower levels of foreign language anxiety among Iranian university students.¹⁷ Students who employed more strategies generally experienced less anxiety compared to those who used fewer strategies. Lucas et al. explained that learners use strategies not only to acquire the target language but also to manage their anxiety.¹⁸ Similarly, Mohammadi et al. found that high users of language learning strategies had relatively lower levels of foreign language anxiety compared to low users.¹⁹ Noormohammadi observed that language learning strategies, particularly affective strategies such as self-encouragement, positive self-talk, and anxiety management techniques like deep breathing, significantly reduce foreign language anxiety.²⁰

¹⁴ Rebecca L. Oxford, *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know* (New York: Newbury House, 1990), <https://doi.org/10.5070/L411004984>.

¹⁵ Shabani, "On the Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL Learners."

¹⁶ Oflaz, "The Effects of Anxiety, Shyness and Language Learning Strategies on Speaking Skills and Academic Achievement."

¹⁷ Shabani, "On the Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL Learners."

¹⁸ Irene R. Lucas, Evelyn Miraflores, and Dennis Ilishera Go, "English Language Learning Anxiety among Foreign Language Learners in the Philippines," *Philippine ESL Journal* 7 (2011): 94–119.

¹⁹ Ebrahim Ghorban Mohammadi et al., "The Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies among University Students," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 3, no. 4 (2013): 637–46, <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.3.4.637-646>.

²⁰ Rezvan Noormohamadi, "On the Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and Foreign Language Anxiety," *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics* 13, no. 1 (2009): 39–52, <https://kiss.kstudy.com/Detail/Ar?key=3257495>.

Based on the explanation above, anxiety related to learning a foreign language is a common phenomenon among learners. Students often experience anxiety or nervousness when learning or using the target language, which can negatively impact their learning outcomes.²¹ Therefore, it is crucial to identify students who are particularly anxious about learning a foreign language. One of the key factors that may help to reduce foreign language anxiety is the use of language learning strategies. While many studies have been conducted in this field, only a few have examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and the use of language learning strategies among university students enrolled in Arabic courses.

This study aims to investigate the levels of anxiety experienced by university students when learning Arabic, to identify the types of language learning strategies they employ, and to examine whether there is a significant relationship between foreign language anxiety and the strategies they use. As a result, this research investigates the connection between language anxiety in learning Arabic as a foreign language and the use of language learning strategies among students at STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan. By exploring these aspects, the research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the psychological and strategic dimensions of Arabic language learning in higher education.

Since this study follows a quantitative approach, a survey research design was used to accomplish. The purpose is to identify the factors that may contribute to anxiety in learning Arabic as a foreign language and to explore the language learning strategies employed by students at STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan.

²¹ Rizka Utami Rizka and Wahyuni Rezeki, "Tathbiq al-Hiwar Litarqiyah Maharah al-Kalam Laday Thullab al-Fashl al-Sani Bi Ma'had 'Ulum al-Quran Takengon Aceh al-Wustha," *Alsina : Journal of Arabic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2022): 263–76, <https://doi.org/10.21580/alsina.4.2.13057>.

This research employed two questionnaires to gather data. To measure foreign language anxiety, the study utilized the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire developed by Horwitz et al., which was adapted to the context of learning Arabic.²² The FLCAS questionnaire includes 33 items categorized based on factors that contribute to anxiety in learning a foreign language. These factors are identified as communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and classroom anxiety. The detailed classification of the questionnaire items is presented in table 1.

Table 1
Numbers of items in the foreign language anxiety questionnaire

The Factors of Anxiety	Numbers of Items	Total of items
Communication Apprehension	1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32	8
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33	9
Test Anxiety	2, 8, 10, 19, 21	5
Anxiety in Classroom	4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 26, 28, 30	11

To assess the use of language learning strategies among participants, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford was adapted as the questionnaire.²³ This SILL questionnaire consists of 34 items, as detailed in table 2.

Table 2
Numbers of the items in the LLS questionnaire

Categories of Strategy	Numbers of Items	Total of items
Memory	1, 2, 3	3
Cognitive	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	6
Compensation	10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16	7
Metacognitive	17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26	10
Affective	27, 28, 29, 30, 31	5
Social	32, 33, 34	3

²² Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety.”
²³ Oxford, *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*.

The FLCAS questionnaire was administered to 82 students (33 males and 49 females) from various disciplines at STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan. These participants were selected using a convenience sampling method and had all completed the mandatory one-year Intensive Arabic Learning Program during their first year of study.

For the data analysis, descriptive statistics were used by performing the SPSS (version 21) in calculating means and standard deviation to determine the anxiety factors in Arabic learning as a foreign language and the use of language learning strategies among participants. In addition to this, we also analyzed the Pearson product-moment correlation using SPSS to determine any statistically significant correlation among participants.

Result

The first question was designed to determine levels of anxiety are present among university students. The results of descriptive statistics were illustrated in table 3.

Table 3
Scores of FLA accross gender

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Male	33	69.18	7.21	51	82
Female	49	75.40	7.05	55	89
Total	82	72.80	7.73	51	89

The table 3 indicates that total foreign language anxiety scores ranged from 51 to 89, with an overall mean score of 72.80 (standard deviation = 7.21). In terms of gender, male students' anxiety scores ranged from 51 to 82, while female students' scores ranged from 55 to 89. The mean score for female students (75.40) was higher than that for male students (69.18).

According to the FLCAS, anxiety levels are categorized into three ranges: low anxiety (scores ranging from 33-66), average anxiety (scores ranging from 67-132), and high anxiety (scores ranging from 133-165). Therefore, the overall level of foreign

language anxiety falls within the average range. For both male and female students, the mean scores also fall within the average range

The second question sought to determine the types of language learning strategies employed by university students. The mean scores for the six SILL categories are presented in the table 4.

Table 4
Mean score and standard deviation of LLS

Strategy categories	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum
Memory	3.13	0.77	1.00	4.67
Cognitive	3.45	0.61	2.17	5.00
Compensation	3.57	0.71	2.14	5.00
Metacognitive	3.43	0.53	2.10	4.60
Affective	3.26	0.69	1.80	4.80
Social	3.37	0.70	2.00	4.67

As shown in the table 4, all mean scores range from 3.26 to 3.57 on a 1-5 scale. The table indicates that compensation strategies were the most frequently used (mean = 3.57), followed by cognitive (mean = 3.45), metacognitive (mean = 3.43), social (mean = 3.37), affective (mean = 3.26), and memory strategies (mean = 3.13).

According to Oxford's classification of SILL averages, strategy group means are categorized into three levels: High (3.5-5.0), Medium (2.5-3.4), and Low (1-2.4). As presented in Table 5, compensation strategies were the most frequently used (M = 3.57, High), followed by cognitive (M = 3.45, Medium), metacognitive (M = 3.43, Medium), social (M = 3.37, Medium), affective (M = 3.26, Medium), and memory strategies (M = 3.13, Medium). The overall mean score for LLS use was 3.44, indicating a medium level of strategy application across all categories.

Table 5
The rank of strategy categories

Rank	Strategy	Mean	Level
1	Compensation	3.57	High
2	Cognitive	3.45	Medium
3	Metacognitive	3.43	Medium
4	Social	3.37	Medium
5	Affective	3.26	Medium
6	Memory	3.13	Medium
Overall		3.44	Medium

To address the third research question, which investigated whether a significant relationship exists between foreign language anxiety (FLA) and language learning strategies (LLS) among university students, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted. As shown in Table 6, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between FLA and overall LLS use ($r = -0.190$, $p = 0.049$, $n = 82$), indicating that higher LLS use is associated with lower FLA levels. However, the correlation is weak, suggesting that other factors may also influence this relationship.

Table 6
Correlation between foreign language anxiety and language learning strategies

		Anxiety	Strategies
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-,140*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,049
	N	82	182
Strategies	Pearson Correlation	-,190*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,049	
	N	82	106

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Further analysis explored the relationship between FLA and specific LLS categories, as presented in Table 7. Significant negative correlations were observed between FLA and memory strategies ($r = -0.271$, $p = 0.005$), cognitive strategies ($r = -0.228$, $p = 0.018$), and compensation strategies ($r = -0.221$, $p = 0.022$),

indicating that increased use of these strategies is associated with reduced anxiety. The strongest correlation was with memory strategies, significant at the 0.01 level, while cognitive and compensation strategies were significant at the 0.05 level. No significant correlations were found with metacognitive ($r = 0.124$, $p = 0.201$), affective ($r = 0.183$, $p = 0.058$), or social strategies ($r = 0.037$, $p = 0.701$).

Table 7
Correlation between level of Anxiety and different language learning strategies

		Memo ry	Cogniti ve	Compensat ion	Metacogni tive	Affecti ve	Soci al
Foreign language Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	-,271**	-,228*	-,221*	,124	,183	,037
	Sig. (2- tailed)	,005	,018	,022	,201	,058	,701
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

This study investigated the levels of foreign language anxiety (FLA), the frequency of language learning strategies (LLS) use, and their interrelationship among students learning Arabic at STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan, Indonesia. The findings provide valuable insights into the dynamics of FLA and LLS in a culturally distinct educational context, with implications for both pedagogy and future research.

Levels of Foreign Language Anxiety

The first research question explored the extent of FLA among university students. The overall mean score of 72.80 on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) indicates moderate anxiety levels, suggesting that FLA is a notable but not overwhelming challenge for students learning Arabic. The gender-based analysis revealed that female students (mean = 75.40) experienced slightly higher anxiety than male students (mean = 69.18). This finding aligns with prior studies,

which suggest that female learners may experience heightened FLA due to social pressures, perfectionism, or greater emotional expressiveness.²⁴

However, alternative perspectives propose that male students may underreport anxiety due to cultural expectations of stoicism, potentially skewing gender comparisons.²⁵ Factors contributing to FLA, such as test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, were evident in this study, consistent with Aldubaikhi.²⁶ Yet, contextual factors unique to STAI Al-Yasini, such as the religious and cultural significance of Arabic as a liturgical language, may also amplify anxiety, particularly for students who perceive proficiency as tied to spiritual competence.²⁷ Conversely, this cultural context might motivate some students to overcome anxiety through intrinsic religious goals, a possibility that warrants further exploration. These findings imply that educators should tailor interventions to address gender-specific and context-driven anxiety triggers, such as incorporating low-stakes assessments to reduce test-related stress.

²⁴ Gökhan Öztürk and Nurdan Gürbüz, "The Impact of Gender on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety and Motivation," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 70 (2013): 654–65, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.106>; Gi-Pyo Park and Brian F. French, "Gender Differences in the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale," *System* 41, no. 2 (2013): 462–71, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.04.001>; Aldubaikhi, "Influence of Teacher/Instructor Foreign Language Anxiety Reduction Strategies on Students' Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Saudi Students' English Language Learning in Saudi Arabia."

²⁵ MacIntyre and Gardner, "The Subtle Effects of Language Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in the Second Language."

²⁶ Aldubaikhi, "Influence of Teacher/Instructor Foreign Language Anxiety Reduction Strategies on Students' Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Saudi Students' English Language Learning in Saudi Arabia."

²⁷ Zawawi Ismail, Nurwaina Rasit, and Triyo Supriyatno, "Relationship Between Oral Language Anxiety and Students' Arabic Language Learning Outcomes in Malaysian Secondary Schools," *International Journal of Language Education* 7, no. 1 (2023): 143–61, <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v1i1.37368>.

Frequency of Language Learning Strategies

The second research question examined the frequency of LLS use among students. The overall mean score of 3.44 on Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) indicates a moderate to high level of strategy use, with compensation strategies (mean = 3.57) being the most frequently employed, followed by metacognitive (mean = 3.43), social (mean = 3.37), affective (mean = 3.26), and memory strategies (mean = 3.13). The prominence of compensation strategies, such as guessing meanings from context or using gestures, suggests that students actively employ techniques to overcome linguistic limitations, possibly due to the complexity of Arabic's script and grammar.²⁸ The lower use of memory strategies aligns with the findings of Fauzi et al. and may reflect students' reliance on contextual learning rather than rote memorization,²⁹ which is less effective for mastering Arabic's intricate morphology.³⁰

However, the moderate use of affective strategies, such as self-encouragement or anxiety management techniques (e.g., deep breathing), indicates a potential gap in addressing emotional barriers to learning. On the other hand, the cultural context of STAI Al-Yasini, where collaborative learning is valued, may explain the relatively high use of social strategies, as students likely engage in peer support to navigate language challenges.³¹ These results suggest that while students are

²⁸ Asma' Fauzi et al., "The Direct Language Learning Strategies Used Among Non-Native Arabic Speakers in University," in *Proceeding of International Conference of Research on Language Education*, vol. 7 (Melaka: European Publisher, 2023), 521–31, <https://doi.org/10.15405/epes.23097.47>.

²⁹ Fauzi et al.

³⁰ Rebecca L. Oxford, *Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies* (New York: Routledge, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315719146>.

³¹ Muhammad Asif Qureshi et al., "Factors Affecting Students' Learning Performance through Collaborative Learning and Engagement," *Interactive*

strategic in their approach, targeted training in affective and memory strategies could enhance their learning efficiency. Educators might consider workshops to teach techniques like visualization or mnemonic devices, which could complement the existing reliance on compensation and social strategies.

Relationship Between FLA and LLS

The third research question explored the relationship between FLA and LLS, revealing a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -0.190$, $p < 0.05$, $n = 82$). This indicates that students who frequently employ LLS experience lower levels of FLA, consistent with Shabani and Mohammadi et al., who reported similar findings among Iranian and Indonesian learners, respectively.³² The negative correlation suggests that strategies such as metacognitive planning or affective self-regulation (e.g., positive self-talk) empower students to manage anxiety effectively.³³

However, the correlation coefficient ($r = -0.190$) is relatively weak, suggesting that other factors, such as individual motivation, cultural attitudes toward Arabic, or classroom dynamics, may also influence FLA.³⁴ For instance, students at STAI Al-Yasini may experience anxiety reduction through strategies that align with their religious motivations, such as viewing Arabic proficiency as a spiritual endeavor, which could

Learning Environments 31, no. 4 (2023): 2371–91, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2021.1884886>.

³² Shabani, "On the Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL Learners"; Muzakki Bashori et al., "Web-Based Language Learning and Speaking Anxiety," *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 35, no. 5–6 (2022): 1058–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2020.1770293>.

³³ Noormohamadi, "On the Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and Foreign Language Anxiety."

³⁴ Horwitz, "Language Anxiety and Achievement."

enhance the effectiveness of LLS.³⁵ Conversely, over-reliance on certain strategies, like compensation, might mask deeper anxiety issues without addressing them, potentially limiting long-term language proficiency.³⁶ These findings underscore the need for educators to integrate strategy training into curricula, particularly emphasizing affective strategies like mindfulness or journaling to directly target FLA. Moreover, the weak correlation suggests that future research should explore mediating variables, such as self-efficacy or teacher feedback, to better understand the FLA-LLS relationship.

Implications and Considerations

The findings have several implications for language education at STAI Al-Yasini and similar institutions. First, the moderate levels of FLA highlight the need for anxiety-reducing interventions, such as creating supportive classroom environments or incorporating low-pressure speaking activities.³⁷ Second, the varied use of LLS suggests that educators should promote a balanced strategy repertoire, particularly encouraging underutilized affective and memory strategies to address emotional and cognitive barriers. For example, integrating guided self-reflection or mnemonic workshops could enhance students' ability to manage anxiety and retain complex Arabic vocabulary. Third, the negative correlation between FLA and LLS supports the integration of strategy training into language curricula, as it can empower

³⁵ Ismail, Rasit, and Supriyatno, "Relationship Between Oral Language Anxiety and Students' Arabic Language Learning Outcomes in Malaysian Secondary Schools."

³⁶ MacIntyre and Gardner, "The Subtle Effects of Language Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in the Second Language."

³⁷ Jeremy L. Hsu and Gregory R. Goldsmith, "Instructor Strategies to Alleviate Stress and Anxiety among College and University STEM Students," ed. Cynthia Brame, *CBE—Life Sciences Education* 20, no. 1 (2021): es1, <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.20-08-0189>.

students to take control of their learning process and reduce anxiety.³⁸

The cultural and religious significance of Arabic at STAI Al-Yasini suggests that language learning strategies should be tailored to leverage students' intrinsic motivations, such as integrating language tasks with religious texts to enhance engagement and reduce FLA.³⁹ For instance, incorporating Quranic passages into vocabulary exercises could align with students' spiritual goals, potentially amplifying the effectiveness of metacognitive and affective strategies. However, the study's reliance on convenience sampling limits the generalizability of findings, as the sample was drawn from a single institution with a unique cultural context. Furthermore, the weak correlation between FLA and LLS ($r = -0.190$) indicates that unexamined factors, such as individual self-efficacy or teacher feedback, may mediate this relationship.⁴⁰ These limitations highlight the need for cautious interpretation of the results and suggest that broader, more diverse samples could strengthen future findings.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of foreign language anxiety (FLA) and language learning strategies (LLS) among Arabic language learners at STAI Al-Yasini Pasuruan, Indonesia. The findings confirm that students experience moderate levels of FLA, with female students reporting slightly higher anxiety, and that the use of LLS, particularly compensation and metacognitive strategies, is associated with reduced anxiety levels, as evidenced by a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.190$, $p < 0.05$). These results underscore the potential of strategic interventions to

³⁸ Oxford, *Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies*.

³⁹ Ismail, Rasit, and Supriyatno, "Relationship Between Oral Language Anxiety and Students' Arabic Language Learning Outcomes in Malaysian Secondary Schools."

⁴⁰ Horwitz, "Language Anxiety and Achievement."

mitigate FLA in a culturally and religiously distinct educational context, where Arabic holds spiritual significance. Reflecting on the study, the moderate anxiety levels and varied strategy use highlight the importance of fostering a supportive learning environment that encourages balanced strategy application, particularly affective and memory strategies, to address emotional and cognitive challenges in language learning.

This study has several limitations. The use of convenience sampling, while practical, restricts the generalizability of findings beyond the specific context of STAI Al-Yasini. Additionally, the weak correlation between FLA and LLS suggests that unexamined factors, such as individual motivation or classroom dynamics, may influence outcomes. The reliance on self-reported data through FLCAS and SILL may also introduce response biases, limiting the depth of insights into students' lived experiences.

For future research, a mixed-methods approach could enrich understanding by combining quantitative data with qualitative insights into students' perceptions of anxiety and strategy use. Longitudinal studies exploring the impact of strategy training on FLA reduction over time would further validate the findings. Additionally, comparative studies across different languages or institutions could clarify whether the observed patterns are unique to Arabic learning or applicable to other foreign language contexts. By addressing these limitations, future research can build on this study to develop culturally responsive pedagogical strategies that enhance language learning outcomes while mitigating anxiety.

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