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From Silence to Courage in Language: Development of Psychological Safety Models in Arabic Language Learning in Pesantren

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to develop the Arabic Learning Psychological Safety Model (ALPS Model) to explain the psychological mechanisms that affect the courage of students in using Arabic. The research departs from the paradox that students can have linguistic knowledge but still choose to remain silent when speaking is perceived as a social and psychological risk. **Theoretical framework:** The theoretical framework integrates Foreign Language Anxiety, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Psychological Safety, Teacher Support, Peer Support, and Willingness to Communicate. **Literature review:** Previous studies have largely described language anxiety as an individual barrier to performance, while psychological safety is more commonly used in organizational studies and general learning. The integration of the two in learning Arabic in Islamic boarding schools, especially by considering the relationship between teachers and peers, is still limited. **Methods:** The research uses a Research and Development (R&D) approach based on model development. Data were obtained through the exploration of the experiences of students at all levels at the Al-Anwar Pacitan Islamic Boarding School, using questionnaires, interviews, observations, expert validation, and empirical testing of constructs. Qualitative data are analyzed thematically, while quantitative data are used to test the structure and relationships between constructs in the model. **Results:** The results of the study show that the silence of students does not solely represent linguistic limitations, but can be a response to anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Teacher Support and Peer Support serve as social buffers that strengthen Psychological Safety, which further encourages Willingness to Communicate and active use of the Arabic language. **Implications:** These findings imply the need to transform bi'ah lughawiyah from an environment that merely demands the use of Arabic to a language environment that is psychologically safe, supportive, and academically sound. **Novelty:** The ALPS Model offers a new contribution by placing Psychological Safety as the psychological infrastructure of Arabic language learning, while shifting the paradigm from making students speak to making students feel safe enough to speak. This model brings together linguistic, psychological, social, and pedagogical dimensions within one framework of Islamic Education.

Keywords: psychological safety, arabic language learning, language anxiety, education in pesantren, courage.

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INTRODUCTION

A student can find out the correct answers, understand the rules of Arabic, and even memorize hundreds of vocabulary words, but still choose to remain silent when asked to speak [1]. This paradox shows that the failure of learning Arabic is not always in what students do not know, but in what they feel when they have to use that knowledge in front of others [2]. In the classroom and Islamic boarding school life, a mispronunciation, a grammatical error, or a vocabulary loss can feel bigger than just a linguistic error: it can present embarrassment, fear of being laughed at, fear of being judged low, and even an urge to avoid Communication [3]. When silence is the safest way to protect oneself, the problem of learning Arabic has shifted from a competency issue to a psychological one. This phenomenon is important to read seriously in Islamic Education, because Arabic is not just a means of communication, but an important part of students' access to the Qur'an, hadith, Islamic literature, and the intellectual traditions of Pesantren.

So far, the success of learning Arabic tends to be read through measures of linguistic competence: mastery of *mufradāt*, *nahwu-ṣarf*, comprehension of texts, translation skills, and speaking skills [4]. This perspective is important, but it has not fully answered the fundamental question: why are students who have certain language skills still reluctant to use it? The answer can be found in the affective and social dimensions of learning. Language anxiety can arise when learners have to speak in a language that they have not fully mastered, while fear of negative evaluation makes mistakes perceived as a threat to social acceptance [5]. In such a situation, linguistic abilities do not automatically turn into communicative behaviors. Students can know, but do not speak; can understand, but do not ask; and can have vocabulary, but choose to be silent. Thus, learning Arabic needs to be understood not only as a process of transfer of linguistic competence, but as a psychological experience that determines whether language knowledge will dare to be manifested in the act of communication.

This problem becomes increasingly important when placed in the concept of psychological safety. In learning, learners need a sense of security to ask questions, try, make mistakes, accept corrections, and try again without feeling embarrassed or losing self-esteem [6]. In the context of Arabic, this need becomes more critical because speaking is a form of social risk: students must show their linguistic skills openly, while any mistakes can be immediately heard and judged by others. A supportive learning environment can turn mistakes into a normal part of the learning process; Conversely, an environment that places too much emphasis on perfection can turn mistakes into a source of psychological threat. This is where there is an important link between language anxiety, psychological security, and the courage to communicate. However, the three have not been placed much in one framework that specifically explains the experience of students in the ecology of Islamic Education. Studies of language anxiety often focus on individuals and linguistic performance, while studies of psychological safety are more developed in the context of organizational, general education, or non-religious learning [7]. The intersection of the two in learning Arabic in Islamic boarding schools still leaves significant theoretical space.

This gap becomes even more meaningful in the context of pesantren because Arabic does not only take place as a pedagogical activity in the classroom, but also as a social practice that is intertwined with discipline, teacher-student relations, peer interaction, and institutional culture. Pesantren is therefore a unique space: on the one hand, the intensity of the use of Arabic can provide ample opportunities for competency development; On the other hand, the demands of language in an intense social environment can increase the pressure on students who feel unprepared or afraid of making mistakes [8]. The problem is not solely whether the pesantren has succeeded in making students speak Arabic, but whether the pesantren has created a psychological

condition that makes the students dare to speak. The Al-Anwar Pacitan Islamic Boarding School provides a strategic empirical context to read the problem because students from various levels experience the process of learning and language interaction in a relatively sustainable educational ecosystem. This cross-level perspective allows researchers to see anxiety and psychological security not as momentary experiences, but as phenomena formed through learning experiences, social interactions, and pesantren education culture.

Departing from this problem, this study shifts the question from "how well do students master Arabic?" to a more basic question: "how safe do students feel when using Arabic?" This study aims to develop a model that explains the relationship between Arabic learning anxiety, fear of negative judgment, teacher support, peer support, psychological safety, and students' willingness to communicate in Arabic. Through the model development approach on students at all levels at the Al-Anwar Pacitan Islamic Boarding School, this study is directed to produce the Arabic Learning Psychological Safety Model (ALPS Model) as a framework that explains the psychological mechanism behind the courage and reluctance of students in using Arabic [9]. The contribution of this research lies in the paradigm shift from language proficiency to conditions of language use: the success of Arabic language education is not measured by the ability of students to produce the correct language, but also by the creation of a psychological space that allows them to dare to try, make mistakes, improve, and continue to speak. Thus, this study places psychological security not as a complement to Arabic language learning, but as one of the important prerequisites for the birth of language courage in Islamic education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Foreign language anxiety has long been understood as a form of situational anxiety that arises when students have to use a language that they have not fully mastered. Such anxiety can be present through nervousness when speaking, fear of making mistakes, difficulty remembering vocabulary, and worries about the evaluation of others [10]. In learning Arabic, this problem becomes more complex because Arabic has a dual position as a language of learning as well as a language that is closely related to Islamic identity and knowledge. Therefore, language errors can be perceived not only as academic failures, but as social experiences that affect students' confidence and participation [11]. The literature on language anxiety suggests that anxiety can reduce students' engagement in communication, but most studies still place anxiety primarily as an individual characteristic and link it to language achievement or performance. This perspective does not adequately explain how the character of the learning environment can strengthen or reduce this anxiety, especially in the context of pesantren education.

The concept of psychological safety offers a more relational perspective to understand the problem. Psychological safety refers to an individual's perception that the social environment allows him or her to take interpersonal risks without fear of being humiliated, rejected, or incurring threatening social consequences [12]. In language learning, this concept is relevant because the use of the target language always involves risks: learners must speak even if they are not perfect, open up to the limitations of knowledge, and accept the possibility of correction in the presence of others. When the learning environment gives legitimacy to mistakes as part of the learning process, learners have the psychological space to experiment with language. Conversely, when mistakes are treated as failures or become a source of ridicule, security can decrease and the tendency to avoid communication increases. Thus, psychological safety can be positioned as a mechanism that explains how language anxiety translates into silent behavior or, conversely, the courage to communicate [13].

However, the application of this concept specifically to Arabic language learning in the Islamic education ecosystem is still relatively limited.

The psychological dimension does not stand alone because it is formed through social relations and pedagogical practices. Teacher support and peer support are two interpersonal environments that have the potential to determine whether students feel safe when using Arabic [14]. The teacher's response to mistakes, how to provide corrections, speaking opportunities, and the quality of interaction with peers can shape students' perception of whether the study space is a safe space to try. In the context of pesantren, the influence is even stronger because the interaction does not stop when the class ends. Language can be part of rules, habits, group identity, and daily communication, so that the psychological experience of students is formed continuously. The literature on willingness to communicate shows that willingness to use language is influenced not only by linguistic ability, but also by self-perception, anxiety, motivation, and social context [15]. However, these studies still rarely integrate teacher support, peer support, language anxiety, and psychological safety in a model specifically developed for the pesantren environment.

Table 1. Literature Review Synthesis and Research Gap

Construct	Main Finding	Research Gap
Language Anxiety	Inhibits Arabic communication	Environmental factors underexplored
Negative Evaluation	Increases speaking avoidance	Limited integrated models
Psychological Safety	Enables communication risks	Rarely applied in pesantren
Teacher & Peer Support	Reduces social threats	Limited integration
Willingness to Communicate	Encourages active language use	Relationships remain fragmented
ALPS Model	Integrates all constructs	Offers a pesantren-based framework

Table 1 synthesizes the principal constructs underlying the ALPS Model and identifies the theoretical gaps addressed by this study. Foreign Language Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation represent psychological pressures that may discourage students from speaking Arabic. Psychological Safety is positioned as the central mechanism that transforms perceived threats into opportunities for communicative participation. Teacher Support and Peer Support function as complementary protective factors that reduce social risks and encourage experimentation. Willingness to Communicate represents the behavioral pathway through which psychological safety influences active language use. The ALPS Model integrates these constructs within the pesantren context, providing a more comprehensive psychological-pedagogical framework for Arabic learning.

Based on this synthesis, three main gaps are the basis of this research. First, the study of Arabic and psychology still tends to separate the issues of anxiety, courage to communicate, and the social environment, so that the mechanism of the relationship between these constructs has not been explained integratively. Second, psychological safety is more widely used to explain behavior in organizations and general learning, while its application as a key construct in Arabic language learning in Islamic boarding schools still requires conceptual and empirical development [16]. Third, a model that simultaneously explains how language anxiety → perception of social threats → psychological security → willingness to communicate are formed by the relationship between teachers and peers has not been widely developed in the context of Islamic education. This study responded to this gap through the development of the Arabic Learning Psychological Safety Model (ALPS Model), which places psychological

safety as a central mechanism between the experience of anxiety and courage in Arabic [17]. Thus, this study does not only test whether anxiety is related to language performance, but tries to explain why a student chooses to speak or be silent when he actually has the opportunity to use Arabic.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a Research and Development (R&D) approach directed to develop the Arabic Learning Psychological Safety Model (ALPS Model) in Arabic language learning in Islamic Education [18]. The research design adopts a phased model development approach that integrates empirical exploration, theoretical construction, expert validation, and model testing. The research was carried out at the Al-Anwar Pacitan Islamic Boarding School with students from all levels of education. The selection of the context is based on the character of the pesantren, which allows Arabic to be learned as well as used in academic and social interactions. The focus of the research is not only to measure the level of anxiety of students, but to identify psychological and environmental mechanisms that explain the relationship between language anxiety, psychological safety, and courage to use Arabic.

The first stage is needs assessment and construct exploration, which is carried out to map the psychological experience of students when using Arabic. Data were collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and observations of learning situations and linguistic interactions [19]. The exploration is directed at six main constructs: Arabic Learning Anxiety, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Teacher Support, Peer Support, Psychological Safety, and Willingness to Communicate in Arabic. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically to find patterns of experiences, sources of anxiety, forms of social threats, and conditions that make students feel safe or unsafe when speaking. The findings were then synthesized with the literature on educational psychology, foreign language anxiety, psychological safety, and willingness to communicate to build the initial structure of the ALPS Model.

The second stage includes the development and validation of the instrument and the initial model. The indicators of each construct are formulated based on theoretical synthesis and exploratory findings, then consulted with experts in Islamic education, educational psychology, and Arabic language education to assess the relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the constructs. The revised instruments were then tested on the study subjects to obtain evidence of empirical validity and reliability [20]. Quantitative analysis is used to test the structure of constructs and relationships between variables, while qualitative results are used to provide contextual explanations of these relationships. The number of respondents, number of items, validity coefficient, and reliability will be reported based on the results of actual data collection so that there is no fabrication of research data.

The final stage is testing, evaluation, and refinement of the model. The initial model was tested to see the relationship between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation and psychological safety, as well as the role of teacher support and peer support in shaping willingness to communicate [21]. The model was then evaluated based on empirical evidence, expert validation results, and consistency with the characteristics of pesantren education. The process resulted in a final model that explained that the students' courage to use Arabic is not solely a consequence of linguistic competence, but is also the result of an interaction between anxiety experiences, perceptions of psychological safety, and social environment support. The ALPS Model is thus developed as a psychological-pedagogical model that can be used to understand and improve the learning conditions of Arabic in the Islamic Education ecosystem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Silence as a Psychological Symptom, Not Just a Linguistic Limitation

The findings of the study show that the silence of students in learning Arabic cannot be simply read as evidence of low linguistic ability. Behind the reluctance to speak, there is a complex psychological experience, especially when students have to use Arabic spontaneously in front of teachers and peers [19]. Students can understand instructions, recognize vocabulary, or know the right sentence structure, but still hold back when they have to say it. In this situation, the problem is no longer solely what the learner knows, but what the learner dares to say. Silence becomes a response when the risk of making a mistake is perceived to outweigh the benefits of speaking. These findings shift the understanding of language participation from a competency issue to a psychological readiness issue to take this competence in the social space.

The experience is mainly related to the fear of error and the fear of negative evaluation. Mispronunciations, vocabulary choices, or sentence structures can be a very personal experience when they happen in front of others. For some students, mistakes are not seen as information that a form of language needs to be corrected; Mistakes can be translated as a sign that they are "incapable", "less intelligent", or different from a more fluent friend. When this kind of perception develops, students tend to use self-protection strategies in the form of silence, avoiding communication contact, or giving up the opportunity to talk to other friends. Therefore, silence needs to be understood as an avoidance response, not just a lack of participation [22].

Ironically, the strategy initially intended to prevent embarrassment can actually reduce students' opportunities to gain the practice, feedback, and successful experiences required to develop confidence. Anxiety may consequently create a recurring cycle: fear of making mistakes, avoidance of speaking, limited opportunities for practice, insufficient competency development, and growing fear of communication. However, the findings also demonstrate that anxiety does not operate independently. The meaning attached to mistakes depends largely on how the learning environment responds to them. When teachers provide constructive corrections and peers offer encouragement, mistakes tend to be understood as a natural component of the learning process. Conversely, when mistakes receive embarrassing, mocking, or openly comparative responses, the linguistic experience may become a perceived social threat. In Islamic boarding schools, this dimension becomes particularly significant because social relationships occur intensively and Arabic use extends beyond classroom settings. Language anxiety is therefore not merely an internal individual problem, but an experience that can be created, strengthened, or diminished through continuous social interaction [23].

These findings also show the limitations of approaches that only seek to improve linguistic competence without paying attention to the psychological climate in which these competencies are used. On that basis, this study interprets silence as an important indicator of the psychological condition of the Arabic language learning ecosystem. Silence can be a signal that students do not have enough security to take the risk of communication, not simply that they do not have language skills. This perspective became an important basis for the development of the Arabic Learning Psychological Safety Model (ALPS Model), which placed psychological safety as a linking mechanism between language anxiety and the courage to communicate [24]. This shift has fundamental pedagogical consequences: it is not enough to create a *bi'ah lughawiyah* that requires students to speak, but it is necessary to build a psychologically safe language environment that makes them dare to speak even though it is not perfect. Thus, the success of learning Arabic is not only marked by fewer mistakes, but also by the greater courage of students to try, make mistakes, accept corrections, and speak again.

Psychological Safety as a Key Mechanism in Language Courage

The findings of the study show that the courage of students to use Arabic is not solely determined by their level of anxiety or linguistic ability, but by the extent to which they feel safe when taking the risk of speaking. Students who have not fully mastered Arabic can still participate when the environment gives confidence that mistakes will not lead to humiliation, rejection, or loss of social acceptance. On the other hand, relatively good linguistic skills do not always produce courage when students perceive the speaking situation as a threatening evaluation space. These findings place psychological safety as a condition that allows linguistic competence to be converted into communication actions [25]. In other words, the ability to provide capital to speak, but a sense of security determines whether that capital is brave to use.

In the context of learning Arabic, psychological safety works mainly through changing the meaning of mistakes. When mistakes are considered embarrassing failures, students tend to avoid risks and choose the safest form of communication, including silence. On the other hand, when mistakes are understood as an inherent part of the language acquisition process, students gain space to experiment with vocabulary, sentence structure, and rudimentary pronunciation [26]. This process is important because language learning basically requires the courage to do trial and error. Without the opportunity to make mistakes, passive competence is difficult to develop into communicative competence. Therefore, psychological safety can be understood as a psychological space that allows mistakes to function as learning data, not as a threat to self-esteem. This perspective explains why an environment that is too perfection-oriented can produce a paradox: the stronger the demand to always be right, the more likely it is that students avoid opportunities to speak.

Subsequent findings show that psychological safety is relational and contextual, not just an individual's internal condition. Students build a perception of safety through repeated experiences with teachers and peers: how mistakes are corrected, how questions are received, how friends respond to incorrect speech, and whether each student gets a fair opportunity to speak. Therefore, psychological safety cannot be built just by asking students to be "more confident". Self-confidence requires supportive social experiences [27]. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this is becoming increasingly important because language interaction takes place in a relatively intensive ecosystem. Teachers, Musyriif, and peers collectively shape norms about what is considered wrong, how wrongdoing is treated, and who feels entitled to speak. When such norms allow room for imperfection, the courage of communication tends to grow; When norms shame mistakes, anxiety can become part of the culture of the language itself.

Based on these findings, this study places psychological safety as a central mechanism in the ALPS Model that bridges psychological distress with communication behavior. This model does not assume that anxiety must be eliminated before students can speak [28]. On the contrary, what is more important is to create conditions that allow students to continue to take risks in communication even though they experience uncertainty and nervousness. Within this framework, the courage to speak Arabic emerges through the process: threat perception decreases → sense of security increases → willingness to take risks in communication increases → the opportunity to use Arabic increases → the experience of success is formed → anxiety can gradually be managed. Thus, psychological safety is not just a pleasant emotional atmosphere, but a psychological infrastructure for learning Arabic. The theoretical implications are clear: if Arabic education is to produce active users of the language, then the intervention is not only directed to what students must learn, but also to the psychological space where the knowledge is given the courage to live through communication.

Teachers and Peers as Architects of Psychological Security

The findings of the study show that the psychological security of students in using Arabic is formed mainly through relational experiences that they experience repeatedly. Teachers and peers are two important actors who determine whether a classroom is perceived as a safe or threatening space. The teacher's response to mistakes, the way corrections are provided, the opportunity given to speak, and the expression of acceptance for students' limitations form a psychological message that is stronger than just verbal instructions [29]. When teachers respond to mistakes as part of the learning process, students get a signal that trying is more important than always being right. Conversely, when mistakes are treated as embarrassing failures, students learn that silence is a safer option. Teachers don't just teach Arabic; Through the way they respond to mistakes, teachers also teach students whether it is safe to use the language.

The role of teachers is becoming increasingly important because correction is an inseparable part of language learning. Proper correction can help students improve their language form while strengthening their competence, but the way of correction determines the psychological impact. Specific, proportional, and improvement-oriented corrections tend to maintain the dignity of students; On the other hand, corrections that are embarrassing, too open, or comparing students can reinforce the fear of negative evaluation [30]. These findings show that pedagogical rigor and psychological safety are not two opposites. Teachers can still maintain a high standard of Arabic without creating fear. The challenge is to separate correcting the language and judging the learner. Wrong language needs to be corrected, but language mistakes should not be translated as an assessment of students' self-worth. This distinction is an important principle in building a safe and academic learning environment for Arabic.

Outside of the teacher-student relationship, peers are the second psychological arena that greatly determines the courage to speak the language. In the life of the Islamic boarding school, students not only use Arabic when dealing with teachers, but also when interacting with friends in various activities. Therefore, group acceptance can be a source of courage as well as a source of anxiety. Friends who provide support, help find vocabulary, continue conversations when impasses arise, or respond appropriately to mistakes can lower social threats and expand the courage to speak up [28]. On the contrary, ridicule, imitation of mistakes, labeling students who are not fluent in it, or a culture of comparing abilities can make Arabic a space for social evaluation. Under such conditions, *bi'ah lughawiyah* can change paradoxically: formally it provides many opportunities to use Arabic, but psychologically it makes some students choose to remain silent. These findings confirm that the quality of the language environment is not only determined by how often Arabic is used, but by how language users are treated when using it.

On that basis, this study places teachers and peers as architects of psychological safety in the ALPS Model. Teachers build safety through supportive corrective pedagogy, providing opportunities to speak, and protecting the dignity of students; Peers build it through acceptance, solidarity, and normalization of mistakes as part of the learning process. The two environments reinforce each other in forming social norms that speaking in Arabic is an activity that is permissible even though it is not perfect. The theoretical implication is that psychological safety needs to be understood as a product of educational ecology, not just an individual psychological attribute [16]. The practical implications are further: it is not enough to build a *bi'ah lughawiyah* program based on the obligation to speak, but it is necessary to build a *bi'ah lughawiyah* that is psychologically safe. When teachers and peers become a source of security, mistakes lose their threatening power, the courage of communication increases, and Arabic has a greater chance of developing from just learning material to the life practice of students.

From Anxiety to Courage: The ALPS Model Structure

The results of the integration of the findings show that the courage of students to use Arabic is formed through psychological mechanisms that are more complex than the direct relationship between language skills and communication behavior. Arabic Learning Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation appear as sources of pressure that make students consider risks before speaking, while Teacher Support and Peer Support function as social resources that can reduce the perception of these threats. Between the two, there is Psychological Safety, which is the central mechanism: when students feel safe to make mistakes, ask questions, try, and accept corrections, psychological barriers to communication become lower. This condition then increases the Willingness to Communicate in Arabic, which ultimately opens up more opportunities for students to use Arabic in an actual manner [31]. This structure shows that language courage is not a single product of linguistic competence, but rather the result of an interaction between psychological pressure, social support, and a sense of security in the learning environment.

Based on these relationships, the ALPS Model can be formulated as a transformative mechanism from threat to participation. On the first side, there is a threat experience in the form of anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. If social buffers are not obtained, the threat encourages avoidance, especially in the form of silence and reduced participation [32]. On the second side, there is support from teachers and peers who change the perception of communication risks. When students receive signals that mistakes can be accepted and corrected, psychological safety increases. This sense of security then allows students to take the risk of communication that was previously avoided. Thus, the main pathways of the model can be formulated as: perceived threat → psychological safety → willingness to communicate → active Arabic use, with social support as a factor that reinforces the process. Importantly, this model does not assume that anxiety must first reach zero. Courage can grow precisely when students learn that they can speak even though they are not perfect.

Table 2. ALPS Model Structure Table

ALPS Components	Functions in the model	Psychological mechanisms
Arabic Learning Anxiety	Internal pressure sources	Increases doubts and avoidance tendencies
Fear of Negative Evaluation	Social threats	Heightened perceived risk when speaking
Teacher Support	Pedagogical buffer	Reduce threats and normalize errors
Peer Support	Social buffer	Building acceptance and the courage to interact
Psychological Safety	Core mechanism	Giving psychological permission to try and get it wrong
Willingness to Communicate	Behavioral mechanisms	Turning a sense of security into speaking readiness
Active Arabic Use	Outcome	Resulting in more authentic language practices

The structure of the ALPS Model also shows that psychological safety should not be placed simply as a "fun learning atmosphere". In this model, it has a stronger theoretical function as a linking mechanism between affective experience and linguistic behavior. This position expands the study of foreign language anxiety, which has often placed anxiety as a direct predictor of performance or participation [33]. This

model offers a more nuanced possible explanation: anxiety can hinder communication when learners perceive mistakes as social threats, but its impact can be attenuated when the environment provides psychological security. Thus, the theoretical question shifts from "are the students anxious?" to "what happens after the students feel anxious, and what conditions make them still dare to speak?" The shift in these questions is an important contribution because it opens up space to understand anxiety not just as a barrier, but as a manageable experience through the design of a learning environment.

In the context of Islamic Education, the ALPS Model also expands the meaning of *bi'ah lughawiyah*. The language environment is no longer understood only as a space that increases the frequency of exposure to and use of Arabic, but as a psychological ecology that determines the quality of the experience of using language. Pesantren may have strict rules for the use of the Arabic language, but these rules do not necessarily produce courage if they are not accompanied by acceptance of the process of learning and mistakes [34]. On the other hand, an environment that provides psychological space for students to try can make the obligation to speak an experience of building competence, not social pressure. In this perspective, teachers and peers are not only providers of linguistic input, but actors who shape the psychological climate in which the language lives.

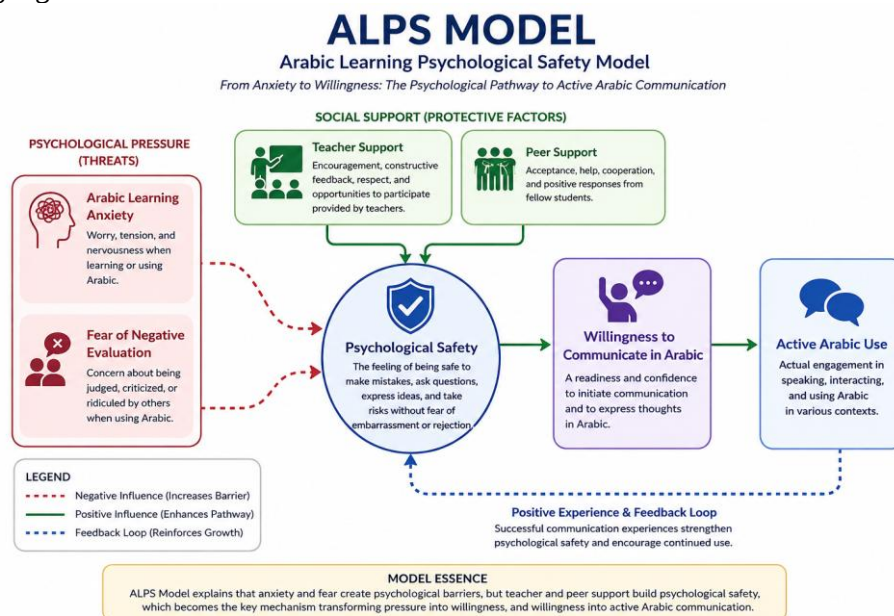


Figure 1. ALPS Model: Psychological Pathway from Anxiety to Active Arabic Communication

Figure 1 illustrates the ALPS Model, showing how psychological pressure can influence students' Arabic communication. Anxiety and fear of negative evaluation create barriers, while teacher and peer support provide protective social factors. Psychological safety functions as the central mechanism that reduces perceived risks and strengthens confidence. As safety increases, willingness to communicate develops, leading to active Arabic use. Positive experiences and feedback then reinforce psychological safety, creating a continuous and supportive motivational cycle within pesantren learning contexts.

The most important contribution of the ALPS Model lies in the paradigm shift from "making students speak" to "making students feel safe enough to speak." The first paradigm departs from the assumption that an increase in the demand, frequency, or obligation of language use will automatically generate courage. The second paradigm recognizes that communication behavior requires a psychological condition that allows

a person to take risks. Therefore, effective learning of Arabic not only creates more speaking opportunities, but also reduces the social threats that accompany such opportunities [35]. Within the framework of ALPS, language courage grows through cycles: a sense of security → courage to try → communication experiences → feedback → increased competence → increased sense of security. It is this cycle that allows the Arabic language to move from passive knowledge to a lively communicative practice. Thus, the ALPS Model offers a psychological-pedagogical framework that places psychological security as a hidden but fundamental infrastructure for the success of Arabic language learning in Islamic boarding schools.

Model Contribution to Islamic Education

The main contribution of the ALPS Model to Islamic Education lies in the shift in the way we view the success of Arabic language learning. Arabic has often been placed primarily as an instrument for mastering Islamic knowledge and linguistic skills [36]. The findings of this study show that these functions will not develop optimally if the learning process ignores the psychological condition of students. Students not only need knowledge of the language, but also the courage to use the language in real situations. Therefore, learning Arabic needs to be understood as a process that brings together linguistic competence, psychological development, and social experience [37]. The ALPS Model offers a framework for explaining that psychological safety is not an additional element in learning, but rather a condition that allows language competence to move from passive knowledge to communicative practice.

The second contribution is related to the reconstruction of the meaning of *bi'ah lughawiyah* in Islamic boarding schools. The language environment is not sufficiently defined based on how intensely Arabic is used, how strict language rules are applied, or how much communication activity is provided. The language environment must also be seen from the quality of the psychological experience it produces. A productive *bi'ah lughawiyah* is an environment that allows students to take the risk of communication without losing their sense of security and dignity. This perspective expands the concept of the language environment from mere linguistic exposure to psychological-linguistic ecology [38]. In this kind of ecology, mistakes are not treated as something to be feared, but as part of a learning journey; correction does not become an instrument for humiliation, but becomes a growth mechanism; and peer interaction does not become an arena of competition, but becomes a space for linguistic collaboration.

The third contribution touches on the pedagogical and ethical dimensions of Islamic education. The ALPS Model shows that the way teachers treat mistakes has both pedagogical and moral consequences. Teachers can maintain a high standard of Arabic language accuracy without making mistakes a threat to students' self-esteem. The distinction between correcting the language and judging the learner is important: the form of language can be judged to be wrong, but the error must not turn into an assessment of the learner's self-worth [39]. This principle aligns with the orientation of Islamic education, which places the educational process in the relationship of respect, example, coaching, and humanitarianism. Thus, psychological safety is not a form of loosening discipline, but rather a pedagogical way to ensure that discipline produces growth, not fear.

The fourth contribution is the formation of the paradigm "from compliance to communicative agency." Pesantren can make students speak through rules, obligations, and supervision, but such obedience does not necessarily result in communicative courage that persists when supervision is reduced [40]. The ALPS Model offers a different orientation: the ultimate goal is not just to make students obedient to the

Arabic language, but to form students who have agency to select, initiate, maintain, and develop Arabic communication. This change is important for Islamic Education because learning ideally does not stop at adherence to instructions, but develops into awareness and the ability to actualize knowledge independently. In the context of Arabic, communicative agency is an indicator that language has begun to become part of the students, not just the rules that must be obeyed.

Ultimately, the ALPS Model makes a broader contribution to the development of Islamic educational psychology by showing that the educational process takes place simultaneously in the mind, social relations, and institutional culture [41]. The anxiety of students is not only an individual problem; Their courage is also not solely the result of personal motivation. Both are formed through an educational ecosystem involving teachers, peers, communication norms, correction practices, and pesantren culture. Therefore, Arabic language learning interventions need to move from an individual approach to an ecological approach: not only teaching students how to speak, but building an environment that makes them dare to speak [42]. At this point, the contribution of the ALPS Model can be formulated in a simple but fundamental way: effective Arabic language education is not only about building the ability to speak, but about building the psychological security that makes it bold to realize. This is the meeting point between psychology, Arabic, and Islamic education, which is the main contribution of this research.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that Arabic language participation in pesantren is shaped by psychological and social conditions, rather than linguistic competence alone. Students may possess sufficient vocabulary and grammatical knowledge but remain silent when speaking is associated with embarrassment, mistakes, or negative evaluation. This finding reinforces the view that foreign language anxiety can constrain communicative participation and suggests that silence should be interpreted as a meaningful psychological response rather than simply a lack of ability.

The ALPS Model extends this perspective by positioning Psychological Safety as a central mechanism connecting anxiety and communication behavior. When students perceive that mistakes will not result in humiliation or rejection, they are more willing to take communicative risks. This finding is particularly relevant to pesantren because Arabic interaction occurs continuously across classroom and social settings. Consequently, psychological safety is not produced by individual confidence alone but through repeated experiences with teachers and peers.

Teacher Support and Peer Support function as important protective factors. Supportive correction can maintain linguistic standards while protecting students' dignity, whereas ridicule, excessive comparison, or harsh correction may intensify fear of negative evaluation. Similarly, supportive peers can normalize mistakes and encourage interaction. Therefore, an effective **bi'ah lughawiyah** should not merely increase the frequency of Arabic use but also establish social norms that make experimentation psychologically safe.

The ALPS Model consequently proposes a shift from “making students speak” to “making students feel safe enough to speak.” This perspective contributes to Islamic Education by integrating linguistic, psychological, social, and pedagogical dimensions. It also suggests that pesantren language programs should evaluate not only students' proficiency and compliance, but also their psychological safety, willingness to communicate, and opportunities to learn through mistakes. In this sense, psychological safety becomes an essential infrastructure for transforming passive Arabic knowledge into sustained communicative practice.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the reluctance of students to use Arabic cannot be explained solely through the limitations of linguistic competence. At Al-Anwar Pacitan Islamic Boarding School, the courage to speak the language is formed through the interaction between Arabic Learning Anxiety, Fear of Negative Evaluation, teacher support, peer support, and Psychological Safety. The main findings of the study show that students can have adequate language knowledge but still choose to remain silent when the use of Arabic is perceived as a social and psychological risk. On the other hand, when the environment provides a sense of security to make mistakes, accept corrections, and try again, the likelihood of students communicating increases. Thus, silence is not always a sign of incompetence, but can be a symptom of low psychological security in a language learning environment. Based on these findings, this study developed the Arabic Learning Psychological Safety Model (ALPS Model), which places Psychological Safety as a central mechanism between psychological pressure and courage to communicate. Arabic Learning Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation represent the source of threats, while Teacher Support and Peer Support serve as social buffers that can reinforce a sense of security. Psychological security then allows students to take communication risks, increase their Willingness to Communicate, and expand the active use of Arabic. The main contribution of this model is to shift the learning orientation from "making students speak" to "making students feel safe enough to speak." Thus, linguistic competence is no longer seen as the only prerequisite for communication, but needs to be supported by the psychological and social conditions that allow such competence to be realized. Theoretically, this study expands the study of the psychology of Arabic language education by bringing together the perspectives of language anxiety, psychological safety, and willingness to communicate in the context of Islamic Education. Pedagogically, this research reconstructs the meaning of *bi'ah lughawiyah*: an effective language environment is not only one that demands intensive use of Arabic, but one that is psychologically safe, socially supportive, and remains academically strong. Teachers and peers therefore need to be positioned as architects of psychological safety, while mistakes should be treated as part of the growth process, not a threat to the dignity of students. In the end, the ALPS Model confirms one important proposition: Arabic language education is not enough to build the ability to speak; He must build psychological courage so that this ability has room to live.

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Author Contribution

Sutarman Sutarmanto led conceptualization, model development, methodological design, and manuscript drafting. Ahmadi Ahmadi contributed to literature synthesis, theoretical interpretation, critical revision, manuscript evaluation, and approval of the final manuscript for publication process completion.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors confirm that this study has no financial, personal, institutional, or professional conflicts of interest that could have affected the development, analysis, interpretation, validation, or publication of the ALPS Model during research.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The authors employed generative artificial intelligence for language polishing, grammar correction, readability enhancement, and academic English refinement. AI did not determine findings, interpretations, theoretical arguments, or conclusions; responsibility remains fully with the authors.

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