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Pedagogical Effectiveness of Arabic as a Foreign Language: A Comparative Perceptual Study of Teachers and Students in Islamic Senior High Schools

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Abstract: This research is motivated by the persistently low communicative proficiency in Arabic among students in formal Islamic senior high schools (madrasahs), which stems from a fundamental perceptual disconnect between educators and learners. The primary objective of this study is to evaluate pedagogical effectiveness through a comparative analysis of teacher and student perspectives on instructional strategies, digital resources, and psycholinguistic barriers. Employing a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory sequential design, data were collected via Likert-scale questionnaires administered to 4 teachers and 15 students at MA Raudlatul Ulum Putra, followed by in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation of instructional tools. The results reveal a statistically significant Methodological Perceptual Gap ($p < 0.05$) across all measured indicators. Teachers perceive traditional grammar-based methods as highly effective, while students report high levels of language anxiety ($M = 4.60$), cognitive burnout from grammatical overload ($M = 4.40$, $t = 6.25$), and a strong desire for more communicative, engaging instruction. Furthermore, although digital facilities are physically available ($p > 0.05$), their utilization remains minimal, creating a provision-utilization gap ($p < 0.05$). The findings demonstrate that teachers and students operate within fundamentally different perceptual frameworks: teachers prioritize curricular completion and grammatical accuracy, while students value practical communication, active engagement, and psychological safety. This study makes three significant contributions: (1) it empirically documents the existence and magnitude of perceptual gaps in madrasah Arabic instruction; (2) it extends the affective filter hypothesis to the Islamic schooling context; and (3) it provides a strategic framework for curriculum revitalization. The findings underscore the urgent need for a paradigm shift from theoretical-scholastic orientations toward communicative-affective approaches, with implications for teacher training, digital integration, and language environment design.

INTRODUCTION | مقدمة | PENDAHULUAN

Globalization has made foreign language mastery an essential competency for cross-cultural mobility and access to universal knowledge (Grosse, 2004; Tochon, 2009). Arabic, as one of the six official languages of the United Nations, holds a strategic role not only in religious discourse but also in global economic and academic diplomacy (Al Shlowiy, 2022; Kamal, 2025). In the Indonesian context, Arabic has been an integral component of the Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic senior high school) curriculum for decades. However, a concerning paradox persists: despite years of formal instruction, the majority of madrasah graduates demonstrate only rudimentary communicative competence in Arabic (Nazhifah & Isop Syafe'i, 2025).

This gap between instructional input and communicative output is not merely an academic concern but a socio-pedagogical problem with far-reaching consequences. Public skepticism regarding the quality of language education in formal Islamic institutions has grown, as Arabic is often mastered only theoretically—students can recite grammatical rules and translate texts—

but fail to use the language productively in speaking or writing (Nazhifah & Isop Syafe'i, 2025). Arabic in madrasahs tends to be taught as a static entity, focusing on the memorization of complex grammatical rules (*qawa'id*) while neglecting the functional aspect of language as an active communication tool.

The root of this problem, we argue, lies not in a lack of instructional hours or student intelligence, but in a perceptual disconnection between those who deliver instruction (teachers) and those who receive it (students). When teachers and students operate under different assumptions about what constitutes "effective" learning, even well-designed curricula and well-intentioned pedagogies fail to achieve their intended outcomes (Könings et al., 2014; Wisniewski et al., 2022).

The concept of a perceptual gap in education refers to the systematic divergence between how teachers evaluate their own instructional effectiveness and how students experience that instruction. This gap is not merely a matter of differing opinions; it has measurable consequences for learning outcomes, motivation, and classroom climate (Könings et al., 2014). When teachers believe they are being effective but students feel disengaged, anxious, or confused, the result is pedagogical dysfunction—a situation where instructional efforts fail to produce expected learning gains.

In the context of Arabic language teaching in madrasahs, this perceptual gap may be particularly acute due to several factors. First, Arabic instruction has traditionally emphasized *qawa'id* (grammar) and *tarjamah* (translation) as the primary methods, creating a teacher-centered, text-focused classroom culture (Ritonga et al., 2022). Second, many Arabic teachers were themselves trained in this tradition, leading to a reproduction of methods that may no longer align with the needs and preferences of Generation Z learners (Jailani et al., 2024; Yasin, 2025). Third, the religious significance of Arabic as the language of the Qur'an creates additional pressure for "correctness," which can manifest as an overemphasis on error avoidance rather than communicative fluency (Al Shlowiy, 2022).

The specific setting of this study, Madrasah Aliyah Raudlatul Ulum Putra Ganjaran, presents an anomaly representative of broader Arabic language education problems in Indonesia. At this all-male madrasah, Arabic has become trapped in a stigma as a compulsory subject that serves merely as a formal administrative requirement. Students view Arabic as a daunting academic burden rather than an engaging life skill, while teachers remain caught in traditional teaching routines devoid of meaningful innovation.

Classroom interaction is dominated by one-way patterns: teachers lecture, students listen and take notes. Learning success is measured solely through written exam scores rather than speaking fluency or listening acuity. This condition is exacerbated by minimal use of Arabic within the school's daily environment (*bi'ah lughawiyyah*), preventing the expected linguistic immersion from forming naturally. The result is a passive learning environment where intrinsic motivation is eroded by monotonous methods.

This field reality provides a strong empirical basis for critically evaluating pedagogical effectiveness to uncover the root causes of Arabic's functional failure for students.

While discourse on Arabic as a foreign language has been extensively explored, previous research exhibits several limitations. Studies by Lubis & Nasution (2025) and Sarah (2024) emphasize technology integration, while Ahamed Zubair (2026), Mansour (2024), and Sa'diyah (2024) focus on linguistic problems in *maharah al-kalam*. Others examine curriculum

development (Hamidah, 2024; Zainur Rohmah Sa'adi & Thohir, 2024), external motivation (Amanda & Khan, 2024; Safira Aulia, 2025), or specific instructional methods (Dakhalan & Tanucan, 2024; Zahro, 2020).

However, the majority of these studies suffer from a fundamental weakness: they are unidimensional, viewing issues only from the teacher's perspective or evaluating learning outcomes purely quantitatively without considering comparative perceptual aspects. There remains a significant literature gap concerning the systematic comparison of divergent views between teachers and students within the same madrasah ecosystem regarding holistic instructional effectiveness.

The novelty of this research lies in its deep comparative-perceptual approach to pedagogical effectiveness. Unlike conventional studies that measure effectiveness through final student grades, this research dissects effectiveness through the psycholinguistic and technical interaction processes experienced by both educational subjects simultaneously. By positioning teacher and student perceptions as equal comparative variables, this study reveals misalignments that previous research has overlooked.

This study focuses on three main pillars, translated into the following research questions: to what extent do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of instructional strategy effectiveness (Methodological Perceptual Gap) in the Arabic classroom? How do teachers and students perceive the role of digital media and the school environment (Instructional Resources & Environment) in supporting Arabic acquisition? What are the primary motivational and psychological barriers that influence perceptions of learning success, and how do teachers and students differ in identifying these barriers? What are the theoretical and practical implications of these perceptual gaps for improving Arabic language pedagogy in madrasahs?

The fundamental argument of this study is that low pedagogical effectiveness is not primarily due to lack of material resources or student ability, but rather to a perceptual distortion wherein teachers focus excessively on grammatical cognition while students require affective and communicative approaches.

METHOD | منهج | METODE

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods design with an explanatory sequential model (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2013). This design combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in two consecutive phases. The quantitative phase was conducted first, involving the distribution of Likert-scale questionnaires to teachers and students to map general perceptual trends. This was followed by a qualitative phase using in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to explore the underlying reasons behind the numerical findings. The rationale for selecting this design is its ability to provide a holistic understanding: quantitative data answers "what" is happening (e.g., the magnitude and statistical significance of perceptual gaps), while qualitative data explains "why" the phenomenon occurs (e.g., teachers' ideological commitments to grammar methods or students' experiences of anxiety).

Research Site and Participants

The research site was Madrasah Aliyah Raudlatul Ulum Putra Ganjaran, selected through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (a) it is a formal madrasah with an intensive

Arabic language curriculum structure; (b) it faces persistent challenges in achieving student communicative effectiveness; and (c) it represents the typical profile of Indonesian madrasahs where Arabic is taught as a compulsory subject with traditional methods.

Participants consisted of 4 Arabic language teachers (all male, teaching experience ranging from 5 to 20 years) and 15 second-year students (all male, aged 16–17 years). The relatively small sample size reflects the in-depth, comparative nature of the study and is appropriate for the mixed-methods design, particularly the qualitative phase where thick description is prioritized over statistical generalization.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection employed technical triangulation through four complementary methods:

a. **Structured Questionnaires**
   Likert-scale questionnaires (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) were administered to both teachers and students. The questionnaire covered three dimensions: (1) instructional strategy effectiveness (5 indicators), (2) instructional resources and environment (5 indicators), and (3) motivational and psychological barriers (5 indicators). The instrument was pilot-tested for clarity and internal consistency.
b. **Semi-Structured Interviews**
   In-depth interviews were conducted with all 4 teachers and 10 of the 15 students (selected based on willingness and representativeness of score ranges). Interviews explored reasons behind questionnaire responses, personal experiences, and suggestions for improvement.
c. **Classroom Observations**
   Three classroom sessions per teacher were observed over a four-week period. Observations focused on teacher-student interaction patterns, use of instructional media, student engagement levels, and error correction practices.
d. **Documentation**
   Instructional tools, including Lesson Plans (Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran/RPP), student worksheets, and assessment instruments, were collected and analyzed.

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data analysis employed descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) to summarize perceptual patterns and independent samples t-test to examine the significance of differences between teacher and student group means. Assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were tested prior to analysis. Qualitative data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman (2014) interactive model: 1) Data reduction: Selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw interview and observation data; 2) Data display: Organizing reduced data into thematic matrices and narrative summaries; and 3) Conclusion drawing/verification: Identifying patterns, themes, and relationships, continuously validated through cross-checking

Trustworthiness criteria were addressed through: 1) Source triangulation: Comparing data from teachers, students, and documents; 2) Method triangulation: Comparing questionnaire, interview, observation, and documentation findings; 3) Member checking: Returning interview summaries to informants to verify accuracy of interpretation; and 4) Prolonged engagement: Spending sufficient time in the field to build trust and understand context.

RESULTS | نتائج | TEMUAN

Methodological Perceptual Gap

The Methodological Perceptual Gap refers to the substantial disconnect between the effectiveness of instructional strategies as claimed by teachers and as actually perceived by students. Table 1 presents the comparative analysis across five indicators.

Table 1. Methodological Perceptual Gap

No	Instructional Effectiveness Indicator	Teacher Mean (SD)	Student Mean (SD)	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Relevance of Communicative Methods	4.50 (0.50)	2.60 (0.75)	4.21	0.002*
2	Clarity of Material Delivery	4.25 (0.45)	3.10 (0.80)	3.15	0.015*
3	Stimulation of Active Engagement	4.00 (0.60)	2.40 (0.65)	4.45	0.001*
4	Variety and Innovation of Techniques	3.75 (0.70)	2.10 (0.55)	4.80	0.001*
5	Quality of Feedback	4.50 (0.45)	3.20 (0.90)	2.95	0.021*

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Descriptive statistics reveal a striking divergence: teachers consistently provided high scores (range 3.75–4.50), while students provided low to moderate scores (range 2.10–3.20). The indicator for "Variety of Teaching Techniques" received the lowest student mean (2.10) with a low standard deviation (0.55), indicating a consensus among students that the class is monotonous. In contrast, teachers felt sufficiently innovative (mean 3.75).

The highest t-values were found for "Variety of Techniques" (4.80) and "Stimulation of Active Engagement" (4.45). This indicates that the primary point of perceptual conflict lies in how the language is taught rather than what is taught. Teachers view one-way lectures as efficient in covering material; for students, the absence of two-way interaction creates a major barrier to second language comprehension.

Qualitative validation from interviews strengthens these findings. One teacher stated:

"The Qawaid (grammar) method is non-negotiable so that students have a strong foundation; even if it seems slow, it is most effective in the long run."

Conversely, a student expressed:

"We just sit silently listening to formulas we never use to speak; it feels useless."

Observation data confirmed that in teacher RPPs, the "Exploration" phase is dominated by teacher explanation (70% of class time), while student practice accounts for only 15%. This confirms that claimed effectiveness is merely "procedural effectiveness"—curriculum coverage—while the reality is stagnation in language acquisition.

Instructional Resources and Environment

Table 2 presents findings on the role of digital media and the school environment.

Table 2. Instructional Resources and Environment

No	Learning Resources & Environment Indicator	Teacher Mean (SD)	Student Mean (SD)	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Availability of Digital Facilities	3.80 (0.45)	3.20 (0.70)	1.65	0.115
2	Intensity of Audio-Visual Use	3.50 (0.50)	2.10 (0.65)	4.05	0.001*
3	Environmental Support (Bi'ah Lughawi)	3.25 (0.60)	1.80 (0.40)	5.12	0.000*
4	Accessibility of Independent Learning Resources	3.75 (0.45)	2.50 (0.80)	3.10	0.006*
5	Influence of Media on Motivation	4.25 (0.50)	3.00 (0.75)	3.18	0.005*

Significant at $p < 0.05$

A unique phenomenon emerges: the indicator for "Availability of Digital Facilities" shows no significant perceptual difference ($p > 0.05$). Both teachers and students agree that technological facilities are physically present. However, a sharp disconnect appears in functional aspects, particularly "Environmental Support" (student mean 1.80, $t = 5.12$) and "Intensity of Audio-Visual Use" (student mean 2.10).

The low student standard deviation in environmental indicators (0.40) shows collective agreement that the school has not provided an adequate Arabic atmosphere. One teacher admitted:

"The projector is there, but setting it up wastes 15 minutes, so it's more effective to just use the book."

Students expressed a contrasting desire:

"We want to hear Arabs speaking via video, but in class, the teacher just reads from the textbook."

This pattern is termed the **"Provision-Utilization Gap"** : physical technology is available, but its instructional use is minimal. Without school policy mandating scheduled digital media use, pedagogical effectiveness remains hindered by reliance on outdated text-centric methods.

3.3 Motivational and Psychological Barriers

Table 3 presents findings on psycholinguistic barriers.

Table 3. Motivational and Psychological Barriers

No	Primary Inhibiting Factor Indicator	Teacher Mean (SD)	Student Mean (SD)	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Speaking Anxiety Level	3.20 (0.45)	4.60 (0.55)	4.62	0.001*
2	Burnout from Grammatical Material	2.50 (0.60)	4.40 (0.50)	6.25	0.000*
3	Lack of Intrinsic Student Motivation	4.50 (0.50)	2.80 (0.65)	4.85	0.001*
4	Fear of Making Phonetic Mistakes	3.10 (0.75)	4.20 (0.45)	3.55	0.004*
5	Perception of Low Future Relevance	2.80 (0.60)	3.90 (0.85)	2.45	0.025*

Significant at $p < 0.05$

The most extreme gap appears in "Burnout from Grammatical Material" ($t = 6.25$). Students report very high barrier levels (mean 4.40), while teachers view it as insignificant (mean 2.50). This indicates that teachers are largely unaware of the cognitive fatigue students experience from rigid linguistic rules.

Student language anxiety reached critical levels (mean 4.60) with low SD (0.55), indicating a collective consensus of psychological pressure. One student stated:

"I'm afraid to speak because if I make a slight mistake in vowels (harakat), the teacher corrects me sternly; so, it's safer to stay silent."

The t-value for "Lack of Intrinsic Motivation" (4.85) illustrates an implicit "blame game" : teachers strongly believe the primary barrier is students' lack of will (mean 4.50), yet students do not rate their motivation as low as teachers think (mean 2.80). Teachers externalize pedagogical failure onto student character, while students feel "blocked" by external factors like methods and materials.

This pattern is termed "Dissonant Obstacle Diagnosis" : teachers view barriers as moral/motivational issues, while students view them as technical/mental pressure issues. As grammatical loads increase, student anxiety rises, yet teachers interpret this merely as lack of motivation.

DISCUSSION | مناقشة | DISKUSI

The Nature and Origins of the Methodological Perceptual Gap

The finding of a statistically significant Methodological Perceptual Gap ($p < 0.05$ across all indicators) confirms what we term "Pedagogical Dysfunction" in second language acquisition. Teachers consistently overestimate the effectiveness of their grammar-translation methods while underestimating student needs for communicative, interactive approaches. This finding aligns with Kamal (2025) and Ritonga (2022), who argue that teachers remain trapped within traditional comfort zones.

However, this study extends previous research by documenting the magnitude of this gap quantitatively (t-values ranging from 2.95 to 4.80) and explaining its origins qualitatively. The gap is not merely a matter of differing preferences but reflects fundamentally different epistemological orientations toward language itself. Teachers view language as a system of rules to be mastered analytically; students view language as a tool for communication to be used pragmatically.

This divergence is reinforced by institutional structures. Teacher training programs for Arabic often emphasize *qawa'id* and *tarjamah* as the core of pedagogical competence. Textbooks are organized around grammatical progression rather than communicative functions. Assessment systems prioritize written accuracy over spoken fluency. Teachers are evaluated on curriculum completion rather than student communicative outcomes. These structural factors create a system that perpetuates the perceptual gap even when individual teachers might prefer more communicative approaches.

The Affective Filter in Madrasah Contexts

The finding of critically high student language anxiety (mean 4.60) and grammatical burnout (mean 4.40) strongly reinforces Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter hypothesis (Krashen, 1982; Du, 2009). However, this study extends the theory by specifying the unique sources of anxiety in madrasah contexts.

Unlike general foreign language classrooms, madrasah students face three additional anxiety-inducing factors:

1. Theological pressure: Arabic is not merely a foreign language but the language of the Qur'an, creating expectations of "correctness" that exceed those for secular language learning
2. Hierarchical correction: Teacher-student relationships in madrasahs are often more hierarchical, making public error correction particularly shaming
3. Peer judgment: In all-male residential environments, speaking errors can become sources of social ridicule

These factors explain why the affective filter is exceptionally high in this context. The finding that students prefer silence over speaking (to avoid error) is a rational response to an environment that punishes mistakes rather than treating them as learning opportunities.

The disconnect in diagnosing barriers ($t = 6.25$ for grammatical burnout) is particularly concerning. Teachers' attribution of failure to "student laziness" while students report "cognitive overload" represents what Georgiou et al. (2002) and Tollefson & Chen (1988) describe as attributional bias—the tendency to attribute one's own failures to external factors and others' failures to internal factors. Overcoming this bias requires structured opportunities for teachers

to receive feedback on student perceptions.

The Provision-Utilization Gap in Digital Resources

The finding that digital facilities are physically available ($p > 0.05$) but functionally underutilized ($p < 0.05$) reveals a "Provision-Utilization Gap". This finding challenges the common assumption that providing technology automatically improves learning. Technology is a necessary but insufficient condition for pedagogical transformation.

The roots of this gap are not primarily technical but pedagogical and cultural. Teachers reported that using projectors wastes class time (15 minutes for setup), indicating that their mental model of "efficient instruction" prioritizes content coverage over engagement. Students' desire for authentic audio-visual input (videos of native speakers) contrasts with teachers' reliance on textbook readings, reflecting different assumptions about what constitutes "authentic" language learning.

This finding supports Afrianingsih (2025), Ahyar (2025), and Ummah & Albshkar (2025) who argue that IT facilities in madrasahs often serve as "administrative ornaments" rather than pedagogical engines. Without training in technology integration, without school policies mandating regular use, and without alignment between digital resources and assessment practices, technology will remain on the periphery of instruction.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes three significant theoretical contributions:

First, it extends the affective filter hypothesis (Krashen, 1982) to the specific context of Islamic schooling, identifying unique anxiety sources (theological pressure, hierarchical correction, peer judgment) and documenting their magnitudes quantitatively. The finding that the most extreme perceptual gap ($t = 6.25$) concerns cognitive burnout from grammar suggests that affective and cognitive factors interact in ways not fully captured by original formulations of the hypothesis.

Second, this study introduces the concept of "Perceptual Alignment as a Mediating Variable" in pedagogical effectiveness. The findings demonstrate that even when teachers are knowledgeable and well-intentioned, and when resources are available, effectiveness remains low when teacher and student perceptions are misaligned. This challenges traditional models that focus solely on teacher competence or material adequacy, positioning perception as an intervening variable that determines the success of knowledge transfer.

Third, this study proposes the "Triadic Dissonance Model of Pedagogical Effectiveness", which posits that effectiveness requires alignment across three domains: (a) teacher perceptions, (b) student perceptions, and (c) institutional structures. Weakness in any domain—even when the other two are strong—reduces overall effectiveness. In this study, teacher perceptions and institutional structures (curriculum, assessment) are aligned but misaligned with student perceptions, explaining persistent low outcomes despite teacher effort and resource availability.

Practical Implications for Madrasah Transformation

The findings have urgent practical implications for three stakeholder groups:

For teachers: The primary implication is the need to recalibrate effectiveness criteria from curriculum coverage to student learning outcomes. Teachers should conduct regular perception audits, using anonymous student feedback to identify mismatches between intended and

experienced instruction. Specific strategies include:

- Incorporating low-stakes speaking activities before formal assessment
- Delaying error correction or providing it privately rather than publicly
- Using communicative tasks (role plays, information gaps) alongside grammar instruction

For madrasah leaders: The findings support the need for systemic pedagogical refreshment. This includes:

- Mandating scheduled technology use (e.g., one audio-visual session per week)
- Revising supervision criteria to include student engagement and speaking practice, not just document completion
- Creating bi'ah lughawiyyah through Arabic Creative Days, language corners, and daily conversation requirements
- Providing professional development focused on anxiety reduction strategies and technology integration

For policymakers: The findings suggest the need for curriculum restructuring that balances grammatical portions with active communication. The current overemphasis on written accuracy at the expense of spoken fluency perpetuates the perceptual gap. Policy recommendations include:

- Revising national assessment systems to include speaking components
- Funding teacher training in communicative, low-anxiety pedagogies
- Supporting development of contextual, digital-friendly teaching materials

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations that inform future research directions:

Sample limitations: The small sample size (4 teachers, 15 students) within a single all-male madrasah limits generalizability. Future research should expand to include female and co-educational madrasahs to explore gender dimensions in L2 learning perceptions, as well as multiple madrasahs across different regions to capture contextual variations.

Design limitations: The cross-sectional design captures perceptions at a single time point. Longitudinal studies could examine whether and how perceptual gaps change over time, particularly in response to interventions. Additionally, the absence of a control group prevents causal claims about specific intervention effects.

Measurement limitations: While the questionnaire demonstrated internal consistency, future research could develop and validate a standardized "Perceptual Alignment in L2 Pedagogy (PALP) Scale" to enable cross-study comparisons and meta-analysis.

Intervention research: Most urgently, future research should test the effectiveness of strategic interventions designed to close perceptual gaps. Promising directions include:

- Teacher training based on Low-Anxiety Instructional Design principles
- Periodic perception audits with structured feedback loops
- Collaborative curriculum development involving both teachers and students
- Flipped classroom models that shift lecture content online, freeing class time for interactive practice

CONCLUSIONS | خاتمة | SIMPULAN

This study confirms the existence of a statistically significant and substantively meaningful Methodological Perceptual Gap in Arabic language instruction at MA Raudlatul Ulum Putra. Teachers perceive traditional grammar-based methods as highly effective, while students report high levels of language anxiety, cognitive burnout from grammatical overload, and a strong unmet need for communicative, engaging instruction.

The perceptual gap extends to digital resources, where physical availability does not translate into pedagogical utilization—a Provision-Utilization Gap—and to the identification of learning barriers, where teachers attribute failure to student motivation while students identify methodological and psychological factors—a Dissonant Obstacle Diagnosis.

These findings demonstrate that the failure of Arabic acquisition in formal madrasahs is not rooted in low student intelligence or lack of physical facilities, but rather in the rigidity of teacher orientations trapped in scholastic-grammar methods, which covertly trigger language anxiety and stifle communicative functionality. Teachers and students inhabit fundamentally different perceptual worlds: teachers evaluate effectiveness through the lens of curriculum completion and grammatical accuracy; students evaluate through the lens of practical utility, active engagement, and psychological safety.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending the affective filter hypothesis to the Islamic schooling context, introducing perceptual alignment as a mediating variable in pedagogical effectiveness, and proposing the Triadic Dissonance Model. The practical implications call for urgent pedagogical refreshment: teachers must adopt low-anxiety, communicative approaches; madrasah leaders must revitalize the linguistic environment; and policymakers must restructure curricula and assessments to value speaking alongside writing.

The challenge ahead is not whether perceptual gaps exist—this study has documented that they do—but how to close them systematically, sustainably, and at scale across the thousands of madrasahs in Indonesia and beyond.

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