Arabic Communication Readiness: Determining The Attitudes towards Arabic Communication among Students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis

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Abstract
Communicating in Arabic among non-native speakers is foreign and it becomes unfavourable for students who have never studied Arabic. But for those who have basic of Arabic, the situation is different. This is due to the fact that speaking Arabic demands knowledge and particular abilities. This study is significant with the aim of identifying the level of Arabic language communication attitude and the level of readiness to communicate in Arabic among the students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis. This is a quantitative study conducted on 150 students at Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis, using questionnaire to obtain data related to the level of readiness to communicate and attitude to communicate. Correlation analysis is used to determine the relationship between two variables. The findings indicates that students' readiness to communicate on average is at a moderate level (M = 3.5703). On average, the students' communication attitude level is high (M = 3.9248). Correlation analysis shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the attitude to communicate in Arabic and the readiness to communicate in Arabic which is supported by the correlation coefficient (r = 0.787, p < 0.01). Consequently, one of the key elements that can significantly influence the level of readiness to communicate in Arabic among students is their attitude, which can help to raise the degree of readiness to do so. The higher the students' attitude, the higher their level of readiness to communicate in Arabic. For further studies, it is suggested that studies relate to attitudes and vocabulary as factors of student readiness to communicate in Arabic.
Keywords: Attitude, Readiness, Communication, Arabic, Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis

Introduction
Language is a communication tool used by individuals to interact with and deliver messages to others. The communication process is a process related to human actions with themselves,

with other people and also with their environment (Ahmad & Mustaffa, 2009). However, language constraints arise when more than one language is used to communicate, whether in oral or written form (Abdul Halim et al., 2013). It can cause the message delivered to be completely incomprehensible to those whose mother tongue is different. Arabic, for example, is a foreign language that is used as a tool to communicate orally and in writing in Malaysian learning centers, including at schools and higher education levels. In fact, Sahrir (2015) stated that Arabic is no longer learned by students of religious schools only; it is even offered at various levels of formal education, whether at preschool, primary school, secondary school, college, or university.

Che Mat (2013) found that learning Arabic at the Institute of Higher Education level as a foreign language is no longer a new thing. In recent years, the teaching of Arabic has been very popular in non-religious schools as well as in public institutes of higher education and private institutes of higher education. Due to that, it plays an important role in supporting efforts to apply the Arabic language to students learning, especially those who are in religious study. Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis (KUIPs) is one of the private institutes of higher education in Malaysia that focuses on Arabic language proficiency. This is proven when there are Arab lecturers at KUIPs who teach and communicate using Arabic. Besides, there are also non-Arab foreign lecturers and students who communicate in Arabic. Because of this, it is impossible for non-native Arabic speakers to avoid speaking Arabic when learning and dealing with each other.

Even through good communication, students can understand learning accurately and interact with Arabic lecturers in the classroom. Abd Rahman and Wan Ahmad (2006) stated that communication skills need to be emphasized in language learning so that students can express their thoughts and observations of something using the correct language. When a student has Arabic speaking skills, he/she is able to communicate with people around him/her who can speak Arabic and the Arabs themselves (Yaacob & Abu Bakar, 2018).

As for the use of Arabic as a medium of communication among students majoring in religion, it is not a foreign matter. This is because most of the resources and learning materials for this major are in Arabic. In fact, Daud and Abdul Pisal (2014) also stated that, for students of religious streams, the norm is that they already have a solid foundation in this language. This basic knowledge gives them an advantage in terms of a broader vocabulary compared to non-religious streams students. This advantage can help them to communicate using Arabic easily in everyday conversations.

Attitude in Communication

Attitude is a condition that causes the desire to change an act or behavior (Ahmad Yalani & Abu Bakar, 2017). Attitude plays an important role in achieving success in something or attempting to achieve something desired (Yahaya et. al, 2007). Therefore, attitude is an important factor in language learning. This is because attitude is a behavior, action, or view of something. It can affect the improvement or decrease of student achievement in learning (Fadzil et al., 2022). This suggests that attitudes are closely related to a person's achievements in his or her learning.

Attitude in learning refers more to the individual's tendency to receive and interpret information (Yusof et al., 2005). In fact, attitudes towards language learning have been identified as influencing the process of language communication. The ability to communicate in a second or foreign language is a skill that must be mastered in the teaching and learning of a language (Noor et al., 2021). In the context of learning Arabic, self-esteem expectations

determine the choice of students to learn Arabic and the extent to which they attempt to master the language. Students with low levels of self-esteem expectations will quickly despair when faced with failure or pressure in the learning session (Yusri et al., 2011).

The involvement of students using Arabic in the classroom provides space and opportunity for students to practice foreign languages more confidently in order to master the target language (Baharudin & Maskor, 2020). According to Basri and Zailaini (2004), the Ministry of Education has listed the objectives of learning Arabic communication at the secondary school level, i.e. to communicate fluently and to be able to express opinions and arguments in specific situations. Therefore, students who studied Arabic communication before entering KUIPs are already exposed to communicating in Arabic. Yusri et al (2010) found in their study that students who already have a basic knowledge of Arabic have advantages and consider it easy, while students who do not have a basic knowledge of Arabic consider it difficult. It suggests that the basic knowledge of Arabic that students possess can enhance their self-confidence, even a high level of self-confidence can have a positive impact on their ability to communicate Arabic well.

However, Rosli et al (2022) found that students practiced the use of Arabic less, outside of the teaching and learning time compared to the Arabic language learning in the classroom. This is because, students assume that mastery of a foreign language is very difficult, especially when communicating in Arabic. The personal factor is the most influential factor in learning a language. If the student has a positive attitude, such as awareness of the importance of the language, then he will try to master it in various ways (Nasir & Hamzah, 2014). Thus, this provides the student as someone who is willing to communicate in Arabic.

The low level of Arabic use among students is also often associated with internal problems such as lack of self-confidence when students are afraid and embarrassed to make mistakes, low self-esteem, lack of enthusiasm, and fear of being laughed at by friends. Students will be less motivated, confident and embarrassed to communicate in a foreign language (Rosli et al., 2022). This problem leads to the weakness of students in communicating in Arabic (Fauzi et al., 2020). This attitude has negative implications for students. The negative attitude of some students who are easily given up and embarrassed by their weaknesses will lead them to lose confidence and feel inferior to engage in teaching activities, especially those involving communication (Yusri et al., 2011).

As a result of a lack of motivation, self-confidence, and shyness to communicate in a foreign language, students have less initiative to communicate and diversify appropriate communication strategies to deal with the problems encountered while communicating. Due to this, there are students who prefer to use their mother tongue instead of the second language, or they keep themselves silent (Alibakhshi & Padiz, 2011). In addition, students' weaknesses in grammar may eventually cause them to avoid using Arabic as a language of communication (Mohamad, 2009). Communication skills require high language skills (Sopian, 2016). Therefore, students should believe in themselves and establish positive thoughts by believing in their own abilities in the process of mastering foreign language communication.

Research Methodology

This study is a survey involving 150 students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis. Questionnaires were distributed to obtain data on the level of attitude and level of readiness to communicate in Arabic among students. Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between Arabic communication attitudes and readiness to communicate in Arabic among students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis.

Findings and Discussion

Level of Readiness to Communicate in Arabic

The results of the study on the level of readiness to communicate in Arabic among the students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis are shown in Table 1. The results of the study show that 50.7% or 76 respondents feel a high level of readiness to communicate in Arabic. While a total of 57 respondents or 38.0% think their level of readiness to communicate in Arabic is moderate. While 17 respondents or 11.3% feel that the level of readiness to communicate in Arabic is low. It is measured using a five-choice answer scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The results of the study states that on average, the respondent's score for the level of readiness to communicate in Arabic is at a moderate level (M = 3.5703, SD 0.8747).

Table 1
Distribution of respondents according to the level of readiness to communicate in Arabic

Level of Readiness	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Low (1.00 – 2.33)	17	11.3	3.5703	0.8747
Moderate (2.34 – 3.67)	57	38.0		
High (3.68 – 5.00)	76	50.7		
Total	150	100.0		

Attitude Level to Communicate In Arabic

The results of the study on the level of attitude to communicate in Arabic among the students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis are shown in Table 2. The results of the study show that 72 percent or 108 respondents feel that the attitude to communicate in Arabic is high. While a total of 40 respondents or 26.7 percent think their level of attitude to communicate in Arabic is moderate. While only 2 respondents or 1.3 percent feel that the level of attitude to communicate in Arabic is low. The attitude factor is measured using a five-choice answer scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The results of the study show that on average, the respondents' scores for this study is at a high level (M = 3.9248, SD=0.5657).

Table 2
Distribution of respondents according to the level of attitude to communicate in Arabic

Level of Attitude	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Low (1.00 – 2.33)	2	1.3	3.9248	0.5657
Moderate (2.34 – 3.67)	40	26.7		
High (3.68 – 5.00)	108	72		
Total	150	100.0		

Correlation analysis between the attitude to communicate in Arabic and the readiness to communicate in Arabic

Table 3 shows the results of the correlation analysis. There is a significant relationship between the attitude to communicate in Arabic and the readiness to communicate in Arabic (r = 0.787, p < 0.01). Based on the strength of the Davis relationship (1971), the value of r

shows that the relationship between the attitude to communicate in Arabic and the readiness to communicate in Arabic is a strong positive relationship. This suggests that the more students are enthusiastic, feel good and do not give up on learning Arabic, the higher their level of readiness to communicate in Arabic. Students who have a positive attitude towards learning Arabic are able to improve their mastery of Arabic communication and gain a readiness to communicate in Arabic.

Table 3
Correlation Analysis of Variables and Student Readiness

Variable	*r*	*p*
Attitude	0.787**	.000

Thus, the findings of the studies presented at tables 1,2 and 3 can be formulated as the students' readiness to communicate in Arabic can be further enhanced and strengthened if they are in a positive attitude toward communicating in Arabic.

Conclusion
A person's attitude and readiness to communicate can have either a negative or positive effect. A person who has a high and positive attitude toward communicating in Arabic will demonstrate readiness to communicate. In addition, good knowledge and broader vocabulary also contribute to the readiness to communicate in Arabic. This is because, with this knowledge, students can communicate with both Arabs and non-Arabs by using the Arabic language. In fact, they are more confident in using Arabic as a medium of communication. This proves that the attitude of students toward communicating in Arabic is influenced by learning and mastering the Arabic language. Thus, it is able to produce students who communicate well in Arabic.

Acknowledgement

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