The Relationship between The Motivation to Communicate in Arabic and The Readiness to Engage in Arabic Communication among Students at Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis

Nur Afifah Fadzil[1], Maryam Md Rofiee[1] & Nur Iylia Mohd Noor Be[2]

[1]Faculty of Al-Quran & Sunnah, Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis, Malaysia, [2]Language Centre & General Studies, Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis, Malaysia
Email: nurafifahfadzil@kuips.edu.my

Abstract
This study investigates the relationship between the motivation and readiness to communicate in Arabic among students at Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis. This study was conducted with a sample of 150 respondents from the institution, the study employs quantitative research methods and utilises questionnaires to gather data pertaining to the participants' readiness to communicate in Arabic. Correlation analysis revealed a significant and strong positive relationship between the motivation and readiness to communicate in Arabic ($r = 0.652$, $p < 0.01$). The mean score for the respondents' level of readiness to communicate was moderate (M = 3.5703, SD = 0.8747), while the average score for the motivation to communicate was high (M = 4.2419, SD = 0.5635). The findings indicate that both the motivation and readiness to communicate in Arabic among the students at Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis are commendable. However, efforts to improve readiness for Arabic language communication should be augmented to ensure that students are consistently prepared to engage in communication across diverse situations.
Keywords: Motivation, Readiness, Communication, Arabic language, Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis.

Introduction
In general, language is learned for the purpose of communication. The mastery of Arabic language skills emphasises the critical role of communication (Wan Azura Wan Ahmad, Lubna Abd Rahman, Arnida A. Bakar & Ahmad Pangidoan Nasution Mandily, 2007). Arabic language education in Malaysia aims to equip students with four core language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, Nik Mohd Rahimi (2000) states that the Arabic language curriculum in Malaysia places greater emphasis on listening and speaking skills over the other two. This focus aligns with the intrinsic function of language as a primary medium

for communication, be it verbal or oral. Thus, listening and speaking become essential skills in human interaction.

The Ministry of Education in Malaysia also highlights the importance of these aspects by introducing the subject of Communicative Arabic at both lower and upper secondary levels. For students in Islamic studies streams, a strong foundational knowledge of Arabic affords them an advantage in terms of a broader vocabulary compared to non-Islamic studies stream students. This advantage enables them to speak Arabic more proficiently in daily conversations. Students who have a foundation in Arabic at the secondary level find the spoken aspect of the language easier to master, whereas those without such a foundation struggle (Ghazali, Nik Mohd Rahimi & Parilah, 2010). This suggests that basic knowledge of Arabic can boost students' confidence in effectively communicating in the language.

The willingness of students to interact and communicate in Arabic serves as a benchmark for their language proficiency. Undoubtedly, students learning Arabic often experience apprehension, worrying that they might make errors in either vocabulary selection or grammatical structure. This anxiety ultimately leads to a reluctance to communicate in Arabic. What is even more concerning is that this reluctance persists even after they have graduated, regardless of whether their field of study is Islamic Studies or Arabic language.

Concept of Preparedness for Arabic Language Communication

The readiness to communicate in a second or foreign language is a crucial factor contributing to successful language acquisition (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). Language educators worldwide face challenges in encouraging students to master a second or foreign language, feel comfortable, and remain unanxious about making errors while speaking in that language. The prevailing perception is that students often experience heightened anxiety when speaking in front of others. As a result, classrooms frequently fall short of exhibiting the interactive and communicative practices anticipated between teachers and students, and among students themselves.

The concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has garnered considerable attention in second language acquisition research and language teaching practice, as it integrates various factors that explain why students engage or refrain from engaging in second or foreign language communication. An individual's readiness stems from intrinsic motivation. Nevertheless, extrinsic motivation factors, such as teachers, peers, family, and environment, also impact one's readiness to communicate in Arabic.

WTC can be classified under the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory, initially propounded by Deci and Ryan (1985). This theory was later specifically adapted to the context of second language learning by Noels and other researchers (Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2000). According to this theory, motivation is divided into two components: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to motivation driven by external rewards and success, while intrinsic motivation guides student enjoyment originating from internal desires when conducting an activity.

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), an environment conducive to motivation should include three additional elements: competence, autonomy, and relatedness to others. Competence pertains to the ability to use existing skills for a given activity. High competence in an activity is correlated with high motivation for it. Autonomy is the willingness to conduct an action in a particular way, implying that individuals should be given choices based on chosen activities. Such choice increases motivation for the chosen activity. Lastly, relatedness

to others refers to the intrinsic initiative to connect with surrounding people and participate in a community. Successful achievements in such contexts subsequently promote motivation.

For students learning Arabic, a holistic motivational approach is often more pertinent. This approach serves as a foundation for understanding, deepening, and internalising Islamic teachings. The primary stimuli and motivations in this holistic approach aim to attain the pleasure of Allah in this world and the Hereafter, linking a student's behaviour in learning the Arabic language. In other words, the holistic approach refers to incentives and rewards stemming from Islamic teachings. Factors propelling students to communicate in Arabic include student motivation and teacher encouragement (Ma'sum Mohammad, 2012). Teachers who provide guidance, encouragement, and learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom can enhance their students' communicative skills.

Communication is an essential aspect of language learning. Individuals with high readiness in communication can effectively convey messages. Barriers and motivation in communication readiness require examination to help individuals enhance internal and external motivations and eliminate communication barriers.

Understanding students' readiness to communicate in Arabic is crucial. The aim is to explore the potential and level of students' abilities to communicate in languages other than their mother tongue. This is aligned with Malaysia's Education Development Plan 2013-2025. According to Nora'azian Nahar and Fadzilah Abd Rahman (2018), strengthening speaking proficiency should align with the second shift of Malaysia's Education Development Plan, whereby by 2025, all students in Malaysia should be proficient in speaking additional languages. Arabic language communication is also emphasised at the school level. The Secondary School Standard Curriculum (KSSM) sets objectives for Arabic language teaching and learning to produce students capable of speaking in various contexts and situations fluently. The Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) also aims to produce students with communicative competence resulting from Arabic language learning at the secondary level (Siti Salwa et al. 2021).

Effective Arabic communication is a confluence of robust vocabulary mastery and stable grammatical comprehension, subsequently leading to student comfort and readiness to communicate. The Malaysian Education Development Plan 2012-2025 also emphasises the mastery of skills in language learning, including additional languages besides Malay and English. Speaking skills have often been the focus of Arabic language research at primary, secondary, and higher education levels. The readiness and motivation to speak in Arabic are influenced by various aspects. Therefore, this study highlights the aspects of motivation and levels of readiness to communicate in Arabic among students at Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis.

Research Methodology
This study is a survey-based research involving 150 students from Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis. Questionnaires were distributed to collect data concerning both the motivation and the level of preparedness for Arabic communication among the student population. Correlation analysis was employed to determine the relationship between the motivation to communicate in Arabic and the preparedness to do so among Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis students.

Findings and Discussion
Level of Readiness to Communicate in Arabic
The findings concerning the level of preparedness to communicate in Arabic among students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis are displayed in Table 1. The results reveal that 50.7% or 76 respondents feel a high level of preparedness to engage in Arabic communication. Meanwhile, 57 respondents or 38.0% consider their level of preparedness for Arabic communication to be moderate, and an additional 17 respondents or 11.3% perceive it to be low. Preparedness was assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." On average, the study found that the respondents' scores pertaining to the level of preparedness for Arabic communication lie within the moderate range (M = 3.5703, SD = 0.8747).

Table 1:
Distribution of Respondents by Level of Readiness to Communicate in Arabic

Readiness Level	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		

Motivation to Communicate in Arabic
The study's findings on the level of motivation to communicate in Arabic among students of Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis are presented in Table 2. The results indicate that 85.3% or 128 respondents feel a high level of motivation to communicate in Arabic. Conversely, 20 respondents or 13.3% believe their level of motivation to be moderate, while only two (2) respondents or 1.3% perceive their motivation level to be low. The motivation factor was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The study found that, on average, the respondents' scores for this research are high (M = 4.2419, SD = 0.5635).

Table 2:
Distribution of Respondents According to the Level of Motivation to Communicate in Arabic

Motivation Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Low (1.00 – 2.33)	2	1.3	4.2419	0.5635
Moderate (2.34 – 3.67)	20	13.3		
High (3.68 – 5.00)	128	85.3		
Total	150	100		

Based on the findings presented in Table 1 and Table 2, the data indicates that most respondents exhibit a high level of both preparedness and motivation to communicate in Arabic. Specifically, Table 2 reveals that 85.3 percent of respondents possess high motivation to communicate, yet only 50.7 percent demonstrate a high level of preparedness. Consequently, this suggests that although students receive a high level of external motivation to engage in Arabic communication, there is a need to strengthen and reinforce their intrinsic preparedness for effective engagement. This is primarily because the most crucial factor in

communication preparedness originates from within the individual. The findings further highlight the necessity of motivation as a key component in fostering student preparedness for Arabic communication.

The Correlation Analysis Between Motivation to Communicate in Arabic and Preparedness for Arabic Communication
Table 3 presents the findings of the correlation analysis. There exists a significant positive relationship between the motivation to communicate in Arabic and the preparedness for Arabic communication ($r = 0.652$, $p < 0.01$). According to Davis' (1971) scale of relationship strength, the correlation between the motivation to communicate in Arabic and preparedness for Arabic communication is considered strong. The positive correlation indicates that a higher level of motivation to communicate in Arabic—which may stem from intrinsic factors, family, and peer influences—is associated with an elevated level of student preparedness for Arabic communication.

Table 3:
Correlation Analysis of Variables Concerning Student Preparedness

Variables	r	p
Motivation	0.652**	.000

Thus, the findings presented in Table 1, 2, and 3 suggest that the readiness of students to engage in Arabic communication can be further enhanced and fortified if they receive heightened encouragement, either intrinsically or from their environment. Self-motivation plays a pivotal role in fostering the willingness and capability of students to communicate in Arabic. Among the initiatives that educators can undertake to augment students' preparedness for Arabic communication include identifying their interests, facilitating face-to-face and interactive activities, and cultivating a student-friendly learning environment. The aim is to bolster students' confidence in communicating, ensuring that they do not feel threatened or apprehensive about making errors during the communication process.

Conclusion
Effective communication is characterized by an individual's ability to convey information in a coherent and organized manner. Preparedness in communication is crucial for achieving this level of effectiveness. Such preparedness encompasses equipping oneself with a mastery of vocabulary and grammar, adopting the appropriate linguistic attitudes, and developing strategies to overcome language barriers. The willingness of students to engage in basic Arabic communication is fundamentally intrinsic. However, external factors such as familial encouragement, peer influence, and environmental context also significantly contribute to students' readiness to communicate. Awareness of the importance of Arabic language skills on a global and international scale motivates individuals to continually enhance their proficiency and mastery in Arabic.

The findings of this study contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge in multiple ways, both theoretically and contextually. Theoretically, the research advances the understanding of the interplay between motivation and readiness in second language acquisition, particularly within the Arabic language context. It empirically validates the applicability of the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) concept in an Arabic educational setting, offering nuanced insights into the specific intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence students' readiness for Arabic communication. This study also fills a research gap by providing

robust statistical evidence (r = 0.652, p < 0.01) linking motivation and readiness, thereby adding empirical depth to existing theoretical frameworks. Contextually, the study is of relevance to Arabic language education in Malaysia and potentially to other multilingual settings. By investigating the motivational factors and readiness levels among students at Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis, the research offers data-driven recommendations for curriculum designers, language educators, and policymakers. It highlights the need for targeted interventions to enhance intrinsic preparedness for effective Arabic communication, especially when students already demonstrate high external motivation. The research aligns well with the objectives outlined in Malaysia's Education Development Plan 2013-2025, offering strategic insights into how readiness for Arabic communication can be strengthened to meet national language proficiency goals. Therefore, the research serves as a vital resource for educational stakeholders aiming to foster Arabic language skills in diverse learning environments.

Acknowledgement

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