

Relationship Between Oral Language Anxiety and Students' Arabic Language Learning Outcomes in Malaysian Secondary Schools

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Abstract

Anxiety is an affective factor that plays an important role in affecting the mastery and achievement of language learning. This study aims to examine the level of oral language anxiety and its relationship with learning outcomes among religious secondary school students in Malaysia. The questionnaire was distributed to 500 form four students from 20 religious secondary schools. Findings show that the levels of oral language anxiety is moderately high level with values (Min = 3.48; SP = 0.64). The significant relationship between student learning outcomes and listening anxiety skills ($r = -.121, p < .05$) and speaking anxiety ($r = -.154, p < .05$) at a significance level of 0.01. This study suggests that teachers should always be sensitive to the psychological needs of students by always provide motivation, encouragement and using effective teaching methods to overcome the anxiety of learning Arabic.

Keywords: oral language anxiety; affective; learning outcomes; Arabic language skill; religious secondary school

Introduction

Arabic has a special position as the language of the Quran and its position globally and internationally has spanned various fields such as education, business, banking and medicine. In the Malaysian context, Arabic was recognized in the education system when the Education Act 1996 explained the status of Arabic as one of the foreign languages in school learning. Over the decades, many studies have been conducted by scholars to identify the factors that influence the difficulty of mastering the language. This is because learning a foreign language is a relatively complex and difficult process (Cakici, 2016). Al-Ghothani (2010) explains that Arabic has a rather

complex grammatical system and has a derivative word that is wide enough to learn. The government itself has played an effective role in strengthening the teaching and learning process of Arabic in Malaysia. Although Arabic language education has long been introduced in this country, the findings of studies on learning Arabic in Malaysia showed that the level of students' mastery of Arabic is still at a weak and unsatisfactory level either at the school level or in institutions of higher learning (Yusoff, Mahamod & Ab. Ghani, 2008; Mohamad, 2009) and the issue of teaching Arabic is discussed continuously by education experts in this field (Saad, Ismail & Abdullah, 2005).

Typically, when discussing Arabic language proficiency and achievement, the discussion emphasizes on individual affective factors such as attitude, perception, interest and motivation and less focus on anxiety factors as the cause of the issue. This imbalance creates a loophole because in reality anxiety plays an important role in determining the success or failure of students in foreign language classes (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). Language anxiety has also been considered as one of the most important aspects in teaching and learning in line with the development of psychology theory of second language learning in the field of research (Hasrul, Noraniza, Melor & Noriah, 2013). Therefore, this aspect of concern needs to be given attention because of the dominance of its message in creating effective Arabic language learning because it pays attention to the psychological aspects of students.

Problem statement

Proficiency in Arabic in Malaysia is a measure of students' ability in mastering the four main language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing (Maskor et.al, 2016). Although Arabic language education has long been introduced in this country, the level of skills and mastery of students at the school level and in institutes of higher learning is still being discussed and questioned by various parties (Najuwah & Nurhajariah, 2014). Hayyi, Nisak & Majdan (2012) explained that although the learning of Arabic begins at the primary school level, mastery of Arabic among students is still not significant. For example, the problem of Arabic language proficiency, especially in the aspect of sentence construction is not limited to only school students, in fact it continues to the level of higher learning institutions (Saipolbarin, Zarima, Nazri & Sidik, 2018).

Empirical studies have shown that one of the causes of this problem is due to the large number of students experiencing anxiety or anxiety during the process of learning the language skills themselves (Thompson & Lee 2014; Hui 2012) and it is the result of relatively low levels of language proficiency (Sparks & Ganschow 2007; Sparks, Ganschow & Javorsky 2000).

Research objectives

The objectives to be achieved through this study are: -

1. Identify the level of anxiety in students' Arabic listening skills.
2. Identify the level of anxiety in students' Arabic speaking skills.
3. Explain the relationship between listening to Arabic and student learning outcomes.
4. Explain the relationship between Arabic speaking anxiety and student learning outcomes.

Language anxiety

Anxiety is a fundamental construct in the field of psychology. From an etymological aspect, anxiety comes from the German language "Angst" which is taken from the Indo-Germanic root word "Angh" which means to close, wrinkle or choke and is believed to also appear in the Greek

word "anchein" which means choking, shortness of breath or depressed (Glas, 2003). Pratiwi & Zilani (2015) and Batiha, Noor & Mustafa (2018) define anxiety as an emotional and psychological phenomenon experienced by everyone in a particular situation and different from each other. According to Alrabai (2014) and Koba & Wilkinson (2000) describe anxiety as a condition in which there is a feeling of discomfort or fear of a threatening situation. Two scholars in the field of psychology, Clark & Beck (2010) define anxiety as a complex cognitive, affective, physiological and behavioral response system and activated when events or situations are deemed to be very difficult and unexpected so that can potentially threaten one's interests individuals.

Studies on anxiety in foreign language learning have begun since the early 1970s (Horwitz, 2001; Lan, 2010; Lucas, Miraflores & Go, 2011). Tran (2012) explains that language anxiety is an important element in the acquisition and learning of a second or foreign language. These terms of language concern arose when Horwitz et. al. (1986) and Spielberg (1983) define anxiety by involving psychological symptoms i.e. a subjective feeling of tension, anxiety, nervousness and anxiety related to nervous system stimuli in foreign language learning situations. The anxiety referred to in this study is leading to language anxiety or in English words that is language anxiety. Holistically, anxiety is an emotional feature that cannot be separated from the cognitive characteristics of a student.

Horwitz et al., (1986) define language anxiety as a complex form of feeling consisting of self-perception, self-confidence, feelings, and behaviors related to language learning in the classroom and it emerges from the language learning process. MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) define language anxiety as feelings of tension and fear in speaking, listening or negative emotional reactions that arise when learning or using a foreign language. Mac Intyre & Gardner (1989) also explained that language anxiety is a feeling of anxiety and stimulation of negative emotional reactions when learning and using a second language. Mac Intyre et al., (1994) described the characteristics of anxious language learners as an individual who considers second language learning to be an uncomfortable experience, often withdraws from participating in class activities voluntarily, feels pressured not to make mistakes and lacks willing to learn it. Von Worde (2003) states that if anxiety affects cognitive function, a student is unable to learn and master what they are learning. This effect will be even more negative if students learn the language and eventually increase their level of anxiety. On the other hand, if students do not have the characteristics of anxiety will feel calm and comfortable in learning a second language in the classroom.

According to MacIntyre (1995) and Alpert and Haber (1960), anxiety can serve as a facilitating and debilitating or referred to as facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety. In other words, it is subject to the perception and ability of an individual to overcome and see their concerns positively or negatively. Most of the findings of the study show a negative relationship between anxiety and language achievement which means anxiety has a debilitating effect on students in language learning (Hasrul, Kamarulzaman, Ibrahim, Yunus, & Ishak (2013). Zakaria, Rajab, Sayuti & Hashim (2007) explain that individuals who see and undergo a negative situation or situation that brings a dangerous atmosphere will produce anxiety, while if a person sees a given task positively, then it gives minimal negative impact on anxiety and can improve performance through effort. Anxiety is a relatively complex concept because it involves one's feelings about one's abilities and potential in seeing and evaluating a situation that is seen as threatening. Mac Intyre & Gardner (1991) explained that anxiety occurs as a result of negative perceptions during the language learning session itself. Horwitz et. al, (1986) explained that anxiety consists of self-perception, self-confidence, feelings and behaviors related to language learning in the classroom and it arises from the language learning process.

On the other hand, anxiety also plays a role in facilitating students when they get good performance and consider that it is a motivating factor for students to succeed in language learning (Sabri, 2010). Jones (2004) states that anxiety plays a role in facilitating language learning when students see this anxiety as a challenge to overcome barriers in language proficiency. For students who consider anxiety as an obstacle and burden will cause them to refrain from performing any given task. Thus, teachers need to take into account the negative perception of anxiety that is a factor in the weakness of student performance apart from lack of learning ability, background and lack of motivation (Horwitz et, al. 1986). Studies have also found that anxious students are more likely to avoid engaging in classroom activities and make them look unprepared or indifferent in the classroom.

In the context of this study, feelings of anxiety is an analysis of the anxiety or anxiety experienced by students in religious secondary schools in Malaysia. It includes a combination of various related feelings such as fear, nervousness, anxiety and worry as well as anxiety due to learning Arabic especially in listening and speaking skills. Past studies have shown that language anxiety plays a relatively widespread role in the context of language learning where as a whole there is a significant negative relationship between language anxiety and student learning outcomes (Horwitz et, al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Hasrul et, al., 2013). This means that the higher the anxiety experienced by students, the lower the achievement or learning outcomes of language acquired by students.

Oral language anxiety

Over the decades, scholars have introduced the concept of four basic language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing also known as macro skills (Aydogan & Akbarov, 2014). The teaching of Arabic in Malaysia has set a goal to enable students to master the four basic skills of the language (Azizan, Rahman, & Jamali, 2014). These four basic language skills are related to each other where. In the process of teaching and learning a second or foreign language, the effective achievement of the four language skills namely reading, writing, listening and speaking is very important (Mohammadpur & Ghafournia, 2015). However, in mastering these language skills, scholars have found that anxiety is one of the top factors that affect and hinder students in learning a foreign language (Sila, 2010; Tercan & Dikilitas, 2015; Horwitz 2001).

Anxiety is found to have a direct impact on student learning attitudes and achievement (Yahya, 2013; Liu & Huang 2011) and is a response to students' anxiety and anxiety over second language learning that includes speech and hearing. Past researchers have taken the effort to study concerns in these four language skills such as speaking skills (Lucas, 1984; Philips 1992), listening skills (Elkhaififi, 2005; & Kim, 2000), reading skills (Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999). and writing skills (Cheng, Horwitz & Scharllet, 1999). Cheng et. al, (1999); Elkhaififi, (2005); and Saito et. al (1999) are evidence to support the existence of anxiety in language skills and have the formation of different instrument constructs. Cheng et al. (1999) explained that the more specific measurement of language anxiety on language skills is very meaningful to identify more accurately the cause of anxiety of a language skill. However, in the context of this study is focused on verbal anxiety that includes listening and speaking anxiety only.

Listening skills are basic skills in the process of learning a language (Rahimi, 2003). Vogely (1998) explains that listening skills are the most important skills in foreign language learning. A student who has good listening skills will be able to understand the meaning and make interpretations from what have been heard. In Arabic language teaching, listening skills are one of the components of language learning along with speaking, reading and writing skills (Fatahiyah

et. al. 2014). With listening skills, students can understand correctly and clearly. Good listening ability will also help them produce good speech. The teaching process to acquire these listening skills is usually through the voice of the teacher in the classroom. Thus, listening skills are basic skills in the process of learning the language that is mandatory for students (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2012). Emphasis on the importance of listening skills between teachers and students is highly emphasized to achieve success in language learning (Ferris, 1998). Rahimi (2005) explains that listening skills training should be the basis for the combination of one skill with another language skill.

However, in the context of language teaching, listening skills are not so emphasized that students do not realize the importance of listening skills to them. Dahan (1995) study shows that listening and speaking skills do not achieve the objectives and goals of the curriculum outlined and direct listening skills are not emphasized in teaching. This is because Arabic teachers consider these skills not important and then ignore them. Arabic language listening skills teaching techniques are also often neglected and not given emphasis in the context of teaching Arabic as a second language in Malaysia (Rahimi, 2005). Listening skills are often neglected in language teaching because they are considered as skills that can be mastered naturally and spontaneously with other skills (Mat, 2013). Gonen (2009) explained that aspects of listening skills among students are not emphasized and developed so as to cause anxiety among them. Although students spend most of their time listening in class, efforts to develop these skills have not been fully implemented.

The implication is that students are not very confident to interact in Arabic with each other, nor with their teachers (Rahimi, Zamri & Kamarulzaman, 2008). Lack of emphasis on Arabic listening skills in teaching also affects students' internal motivation (Rahimi 2005). Findings of the study by Fatahiyah et. al, (2014) on the level of basic Arabic language skills of Malaysian students in higher learning institution show that the level of listening skills of students is at a moderate level. Similarly, the findings of a study conducted by Sumaiyah Sulaiman, Nik Farhan Mustapha, Toklubok & Sulong (2018) which showed that there are barriers to mastery of listening skills in learning Arabic among students of the institute of teacher education due to internal and external factors students.

Over the decades, scholars have researched listening anxiety in foreign language learning and found that listening anxiety affects student achievement (Kimura, 2008). However, studies focusing on listening anxiety are very limited (Zhang, 2013) especially those related to learning Arabic. An empirical study was conducted by Elkhafafi (2005) to identify the relationship of listening anxiety of Arabic to student achievement among 233 postgraduate students studying Arabic language courses at one of the universities in North America. The findings show that anxiety of listening to Arabic has a negative relationship with students' academic achievement. It can be concluded that the higher listening anxiety experienced by a student, the lower their language learning performance. Therefore, the role of teachers in creating a friendly classroom environment is important in order to reduce anxiety among students. Teachers are also encouraged to implement Arabic language programs to help students improve their Arabic listening skills.

In foreign language learning, speaking skills are considered as one of the most important skills compared to other language skills such as listening, reading and writing (El- Sakka, 2016; Shabani, 2012). According to Tanveer (2007) the most critical challenge for most students in mastering a foreign language is from the aspect of speaking skills. Speaking skills have been widely recognized as one of the most common problems faced by students in the classroom (Humphries, 2011; Sila, 2010; MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Horwitz et. Al,

1986). Past studies have also found that anxiety in aspects of speaking skills has become the most dominant barrier to language learning (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989).

In the past, efforts towards developing speaking skills among students are often overlooked with the assumption that students will indirectly master those skills during the learning process of writing, reading and listening skills (El-Sakka, 2016). At the school level, the development of students' speaking skills is also often set aside because the focus of teachers is more on helping students to pass in the actual examination (Yahya, 2013). With this awareness, the subject of Communication Arabic has been created by the Ministry of Education Malaysia at the primary and secondary levels. Basic knowledge at the primary school level is very important in helping students speak Arabic easily especially in their everyday conversation (Daud & Pisai, 2014).

Although the initiative has been implemented by the Ministry of Education Malaysia, but various studies have proven that students are still weak in mastering the Arabic language, especially in terms of speaking skills. The study of Yusri, Rahimi & Parilah (2010) found that students who easily give up and are ashamed of their own weaknesses cause them to lose self-confidence and feel inferior to speak in Arabic. These findings are in line with the study of Halim (2009) who found that the level of use of students in speaking skills is due to internal problems faced by students when students are afraid and ashamed to make mistakes, low self-esteem, lack of enthusiasm and fear of being laughed at. A study by Mastura and Kaseh (2012) found that most students in institutions of higher learning, especially in the stream of Islamic education are still not able to master speaking skills despite having extensive exposure in the Arabic language since high school.

Aladdin's (2012) study found that the weakness of Arabic language proficiency among students is due to their lack of speaking in the language. This causes them to feel scared and unable to communicate with each other in the foreign language they are learning (Mosaddaq, 2013). A study conducted by Pratiwi et. al. (2015) against university students in the course Maharat al-Muhadathah wa al-Khatabah has also found that among the factors that influence students' anxiety to speak Arabic is due to feelings of shame, insecurity and lack of interest. It can be concluded that the weaknesses that occur among these students are a manifestation of the Arabic language concerns faced by students. This clearly shows that anxiety in learning and speaking Arabic does exist among students.

Learning outcomes

Ramsden (2003) describes the definition of learning outcomes as a specific and clear statement of the expectations of what students will learn and can be achieved by them at the end of a learning whether in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. In measuring learning outcomes, Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) is used because it is comprehensive, communicative and a source of reference in helping a person gain an expectation of the aspects of emphasis that should be given to certain behaviors in a set of educational planning. He has established that this taxonomy includes three domains namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor for evaluating a learning outcome.

Language anxiety have been identified to contribute to and influence student learning outcomes or achievement in learning. Studies on language anxiety and their relationship to student learning outcomes or achievement have begun as early as the 1970s. Empirical studies have also shown a significant relationship between foreign language anxiety and learning outcomes and student achievement at various levels including university students and school students as well as

involving various target languages. (Horwitz, 2001) This proves that anxiety as one of the affective factors that can contribute to student learning outcomes in foreign language proficiency.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive study that uses survey design (survey) and uses quantitative data analysis methods. The survey design was chosen for this study on the basis that it is suitable for use in research that aims to describe a phenomenon that is happening (Konting, 1998). This survey method was chosen because it can describe language concerns in Arabic language skills, namely listening and speaking skills. The respondents of the study consisted of 500 form four students in religious secondary schools in Malaysia.

The sampling method in this study uses stratified random sampling method because it is based on the five zones in Malaysia. In the context of this study, a set of questionnaires was constructed by the researcher in an adaptation and modification from the items of the previous research questionnaire to measure Arabic language concerns in detail and comprehensively based on certain themes or constructs that cover two Arabic language skills namely listening and speaking as well as learning outcomes. This questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale. Researchers use descriptive statistics to assess mean, standard deviation and frequency.

To measure the listening anxiety construct, the researcher adapted the instrument developed by Kim (2000) which is Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) which has three subconstructs namely knowledge background, text and strategy, and listener character. To measure the speaking anxiety construct, an instrument called Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et, al. (1986) which has three subconstructs namely communication anxiety, fear of negative assessment and anxiety in exams and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scales (FLSAS) by Balemir (2009) which has four subconstructs namely personal reasons, teacher attitudes, test situations and teaching procedures have used. However, in the FLCAS instrument by Horwitz et, al. (1986) this, the researcher only adapts and uses items under the subconstruct of communication anxiety only because it is related to speaking skills. To measure learning outcomes, the items of learning outcome construct were adapted and modified from a questionnaire developed by Halias (2016). The items for the learning outcomes construct consisting of three subconstructs of Bloom's Taxonomy learning domain namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor were constructed by previous researchers based on the learning outcomes verbs according to the theoretical level. Next, modifications were made to selected items based on expert views and pilot study findings. All of these adapted items were re-tested for their validity and reliability through Cronbach Alpha evaluation and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)..

Findings

This study has used the interpretation value of the mean score level outlined by Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) which is 1.00 to 2.00 carries a low level interpretation, while the mean score between 2.01 - 3.00 is at medium low level, and 3.01 to 4.00 at medium high level and 4.01 up to 5.00 is at a high level.

Based on Table 1 shows the mean score, standard deviation and mean interpretation of the Arabic listening anxiety construct are ($M = 3.48$; $SP = 0.64$). This indicates that students experience listening anxiety at a moderately high level. While for speaking anxiety construct shows ($M = 3.29$; $SP = 0.57$) which interprets that overall of Arabic speaking anxiety among students is also at a moderately high level.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of oral language anxiety in Arabic Language

Construct	Subconstructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Oral Language Anxiety	Listening anxiety	3.48	0.64	Moderately High
	Speaking anxiety	3.29	0.57	Moderately High

Table 2 shows the mean score, standard deviation and mean interpretation of the overall mean for the listening anxiety constructs. The results of the analysis found that the overall mean for the Arabic listening anxiety construct was 3.48 and the standard deviation was 0.64. This indicates that students experience listening anxiety at a moderately high level. The highest mean obtained was 3.80 (SP = 0.93) on the aspect of a person speaking Arabic quickly and students could not understand it. While the lowest mean value obtained is 3.24 (SP = 0.94) in terms of students can not hear in Arabic at their own ability. This item has a relatively low mean compared to other items that are likely to be influenced by the students' own listening skills competency factor. Other aspects studied related to listening skills concerns showed a slight mean difference and all were at a mean above 3.01. These aspects are related to falling asleep while listening to important ideas (Mean = 3.64, SP = 0.88), not understanding vocabulary during listening test (Mean = 3.56, SP = 0.98), very confused and forgetting what has been heard (Min = 3.49, SP = 0.94), not sure whether to understand what is heard (Min = 3.44, SP = 0.87), failed to get the keyword from the Arabic passage heard (Min = 3.43, SP = 1.08), do not understand verbal instructions in Arabic (Min = 3.41, SP = 1.06), listen to vocabulary that is never heard (Min = 3.37, SP = 1.03), others understand Arabic except me (Min = 3.35, SP = 1.11) and unable to hear Arabic at their own pace (Min = 3.23, SP = 0.94). In general, these findings indicate that Arabic language students have moderate to high level listening anxiety.

Table 2. Levels of Arabic listening anxiety

Aspects	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Someone speaks Arabic fast and does not understand it	5 (1.0%)	44 (8.8%)	114 (22.8%)	218 (43.6%)	119 (23.8%)	3.80	0.93	Moderately High
Fall asleep while listening to important ideas in Arabic	9 (1.8%)	43 (8.6%)	134 (26.8%)	245 (49%)	69 (13.8%)	3.64	0.88	Moderately High
Did not understand vocabulary during the listening test	15 (3.0%)	57 (11.4%)	136 (27.2%)	216 (43.2%)	76 (15.2%)	3.56	0.98	Moderately High

Aspects	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Very confused and forgot what was heard in Arabic	16 (3.2%)	55 (11.0%)	156 (31.2%)	214 (42.8%)	59 (11.8%)	3.49	0.94	Moderately High
Not sure if understand what is heard in Arabic	12 (2.4%)	57 (11.4%)	165 (33%)	229 (45.8%)	37 (7.4%)	3.44	0.87	Moderately High
Failed to get key words from the Arabic passage heard	28 (5.6%)	70 (14%)	136 (27.2%)	189 (37.8%)	77 (15.4%)	3.43	1.08	Moderately High
Does not understand oral instructions in Arabic	23 (4.6%)	75 (15%)	151 (30.2%)	174 (34.8%)	77 (15.4%)	3.41	1.06	Moderately High
Listen to vocabulary never heard	19 (3.8%)	86 (17.2%)	156 (31.2%)	171 (34.2)	68 (13.65)	3.37	1.03	Moderately High
Everyone else understands Arabic except me	25 (5.0%)	92 (18.4%)	154 (30.8%)	142 (28.4%)	87 (17.4%)	3.35	1.11	Moderately High
Cannot hear Arabic at his own pace	19 (3.8%)	87 (17.4%)	182 (36.4%)	179 (35.8%)	33 (6.6%)	3.24	0.94	Moderately High
Overall Mean						3.48	0.64	Moderately High

Table 3 shows the mean score, standard deviation and mean interpretation of the overall mean for the speaking anxiety subconstructs. The results of the analysis found that the overall mean for the Arabic-speaking anxiety construct was 3.29 and the standard deviation was 0.57. This indicates that students experience moderate to high level speaking anxiety. All items got a mean value at the medium to high level except for one item at the medium to low level. The highest mean obtained was 3.77 (SP = 0.99) on the aspect of anxiety facing the Arabic oral test. While the lowest mean obtained is 2.82 (SP = 1.11) which is on the item of anxiety following the Arabic speaking class for fear of being corrected by the teacher. This item has a relatively low mean compared to other items likely to be influenced by factors of embarrassment and fear of speaking in Arabic. Other aspects studied related to listening anxiety showed a slight mean difference and

all were at a mean above 3.01. These aspects are related to the Arabic oral test conducted (Min = 3.67, SP = 1.01), other students speak Arabic better (Min = 3.67, SP = 0.92), not confident to speak in Arabic class (Mean = 3.62, SP = 0.90), speaking unprepared in Arabic language classes (Min = 3.48, SP = 1.02), knowing will be assessed in learning Arabic (Min = 3.37, SP = 0.99), giving incorrect answers in Arabic class (Min = 3.37, SP = 0.96), name is called in Arabic class (Min = 3.22, SP = 1.14), teacher corrects errors when speaking Arabic (Min = 3.06, SP = 1.16), teacher asks other students corrected my mistakes while speaking Arabic (Min = 3.04, SP = 1.07) and other students laughed at me speaking Arabic (Min = 3.03, SP = 1.18). In general, these findings indicate that Arabic language students have moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety.

Table 3. Levels of Arabic speaking anxiety

Aspects	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Facing the Arabic oral test	12 (2.4%)	46 (11.6%)	109 (33.4%)	212 (75.8%)	121 (24.2%)	3.77	0.99	Moderately High
Arabic oral tests were conducted	14 (2.8%)	57 (11.4%)	108 (21.6%)	220 (44%)	101 (20.2%)	3.67	1.01	Moderately High
Other students speak Arabic better	8 (1.6%)	49 (9.85)	131 (26.2%)	225 (45%)	87 (17.4%)	3.67	0.92	Moderately High
Not sure how to speak in Arabic	5 (1%)	60 (12%)	124 (24.8%)	241 (48.2%)	70 (14%)	3.62	0.90	Moderately High
Speaking with unprepared in Arabic class	22 (4.4%)	62 (12.4%)	145 (29%)	198 (39.6%)	73 (14.6%)	3.48	1.02	Moderately High
Getting to know will be assessed in learning Arabic	22 (4.4%)	75 (15%)	144 (28.8%)	212 (42.4%)	47 (9.4%)	3.37	0.99	Moderately High
Gives incorrect answers in Arabic language classes	16 (3.2%)	76 (15.2%)	164 (32.8%)	195 (39%)	49 (9.8%)	3.37	0.96	Moderately High
The name is called in the Arabic language class	46 (9.2%)	82 (16.4%)	153 (30.6%)	155 (31%)	64 (12.8%)	3.22	1.14	Moderately High
The teacher corrected my mistake while speaking Arabic	59 (11.8%)	105 (21%)	125 (25%)	169 (33.8%)	42 (8.4%)	3.06	1.16	Moderately High
The teacher asked other students to	43 (8.6%)	116 (23.2%)	156 (31.2%)	149 (29.8%)	36 (7.2%)	3.04	1.07	Moderately High

Aspects	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
correct my mistakes while speaking Arabic								
Other students laughed at me speaking Arabic	65 (13%)	97 (19.4%)	148 (29.6%)	140 (28%)	50 (10%)	3.03	1.18	Moderately High
Attending Arabic speaking classes and fear of being corrected by the teacher	70 (14%)	124 (24.8%)	162 (32.4%)	114 (22.8%)	30 (6%)	2.82	1.11	Moderately High
Overall Mean						3.29	0.57	Moderately High

Table 4. The relationship between oral language anxiety and student learning outcomes

		Listening Anxiety	Speaking Anxiety	Learning Outcomes
Listening Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	.457**	-.154**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.001
	N	500	500	500
Speaking Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.457**	1	-.121**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.007
	N	500	500	500
Learning Outcomes	Pearson Correlation	-.154**	-.121**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.007	
	N	500	500	500

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

Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between listening anxiety and student learning outcomes ($r = -.154$, $p < .05$) at a significance level of 0.01. The table above also shows that there is a significant relationship between speaking anxiety and student learning outcomes ($r = -.121$, $p < .05$) at a significance level of 0.01. The findings of this relationship indicate that oral language anxiety affect and have a significant relationship or relevance to student learning outcomes. The resulting form of relationship between the two constructs is negative. This result shows that if the student has a high or frequent anxiety score, then the student learning outcome score is also low and vice versa. This means that the higher or more frequent the oral language anxiety experienced by students then the lower or weaker the level of learning outcomes shown by students towards Arabic. Therefore, in order to create effective teaching and learning, teachers need to pay attention and be sensitive to students' Arabic language anxiety because student learning outcomes are influenced by anxiety.

Discussion and implications of the study

The results of the data analysis show that the level of Arabic oral language anxiety among religious secondary school students in Malaysia in listening and speaking skills reach a moderately high level. As for the subconstruct of listening anxiety, the findings show that students often experience anxiety especially when listening to Arabic speech from others at a rapid rate and not able to understand it. Students will feel anxious and nervous to respond and continue the next communication. The findings of this study are good and coincide with the findings of a study conducted by Tahsildar & Yusoff (2014) who found that unintelligible pronunciation and speed of delivery of input heard by students are major causes in listening anxiety. In addition, it is also influenced by factors of knowledge background, low self-confidence of students as well as ineffective use of listening strategies..

This study also coincides with the study of Vogely (1998) who found that among the causes of listening anxiety is based on the characteristics of the input heard such as speed or uncertainty with the input heard by a student. These findings are also consistent with a study by Kim (2000) who found that the characteristics of the input heard such as pronunciation speed and intonation, text length and vocabulary level are the cause of listening anxiety among students. While a study by Xu (2011) also found that the characteristics of the input heard such as speed, difficulty level and lack of repetition of words are major factors for listening anxiety.

In this context, teachers need to play an important role in emphasizing Arabic listening skills in teaching. This is because listening skills are basic skills that need to be prioritized in the language teaching process. Rahimi (2005) explains that Arabic language listening skills teaching techniques are often neglected and not emphasized in the context of teaching Arabic as a second language in Malaysia. Listening skills are also not given much emphasis so that students do not realize the importance of mastering listening skills in learning Arabic (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2012). A study by Pisol et.al (2016) found that the level of implementation of listening skills in learning Arabic as a whole is at a moderately low level. Teachers were found not to pay attention to the use of appropriate tones of the situation and less emphasis on listening activities and caused the learning environment of Arabic to be bland and less effective.

This scenario is the cause and barrier of mastery of Arabic listening skills so as to cause anxiety among students. This coincides with the study conducted by Sulaiman et, al. (2018) who found that among the external factors that influence the barriers to mastery of Arabic listening skills are due to words, speaker speed, text heard, lack of learning aids and external disturbances. Therefore, Arabic language students need to be exposed to effective skills strategies as well as diversify listening skills activities in the classroom.

These findings indicate that students often experience speaking anxiety when facing the Arabic oral test to be implemented. The findings of this study are in line with the study conducted by Mazouzi (2013) who studied students' perceptions of the effect of language anxiety on English oral test when all study respondents agreed that they experienced anxiety in facing oral test. Zhang and Liu's (2013) study also showed that students experience anxiety during the English oral test conducted and affect the performance of their tests. Horwitz et.al (1986) and Young (1991) also explained that anxiety in oral tests experienced by students was found to be very significant and very high in speaking skills.

The findings of this study are also in line with the study conducted by Rasmodjo (2011) who found that the majority of students experience anxiety at a moderately high level before sitting for the oral test and when faced with unknown questions or ideas during the oral test. McCroskey (1984) found that students with high anxiety in speaking skills will try to avoid participating in

activities that involve speaking spontaneously. Students will feel anxious for not being able to organize and deliver their speech correctly and confident in turn making them fear and embarrassment. They have a negative perception of the response or response from the listener or other friends because of the choice of vocabulary and how to organize weak ideas when speaking. Zheng (2008) explains that anxiety will affect speed and accuracy in speech and can affect the quality of output during communication.

There are several factors that cause students' weaknesses in mastering speaking skills. Among them is due to the lack of a strong culture and language environment to support students who speak Arabic at school (Samah et.al, 2013). Lack of Arabic language practice and making it a medium of communication is the cause of students' weakness in these skills. Arabic is only used during the teaching process of teachers while the living environment with the atmosphere of the Arabic language itself is very important in creating an active learning environment among students (Kamaruddin, 1997). It can improve students' social skills, especially in mastering and acquiring Arabic.

In addition, it was found that the Arabic-speaking anxiety factor is one of the predictors of student learning outcomes. Past studies have also shown a significant relationship between foreign language anxiety and learning outcomes and student achievement at various levels including university students and school students (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Hasrul et. al, 2013; Atasheneh & Izadi, 2012; Al-Shboul et. al, 2013; Yadav et. al, 2013; Demirdas & Bozdogan, 2013; Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015; Mohammadpur & Ghafournia, 2015; and Cakici, 2016). The findings of these studies show that students who have a high level of foreign language anxiety will get a lower grade than students who have a low level of language anxiety.

From the aspect of teaching Arabic, there are several factors that have been identified that are the cause of the weakness of Arabic among students. Samah's (2012) study found that student-centered teaching factors, text-based teaching, lack of training and questions, lack of teaching aids, lack of activity, students' passive attitude and lack of Arabic communication are contributing to the problem of Arabic speaking skills among students. Even more disappointing when there are attitudes and practices of some teachers who do not practice Arabic and do not follow the communicative approach when conducting the teaching and learning process in the classroom (Ismail et. al, 2011). Therefore, teachers should maintain an Arabic speaking environment continuously, while wisely practicing communication techniques among students. The speaking skills of the teaching staff play an important role in the teaching and learning process (Muhammad et. al, 2012). Directly it can have a positive impact and motivation for students to cultivate the Arabic language.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that the oral language anxiety of Arabic language among religious secondary school students in Malaysia that is for listening and speaking skills as a whole is at a moderately high level. It was also found that oral language anxiety has a significant relationship with student learning outcomes in school, this study suggests that teachers to emphasize various and effective strategies and methods of teaching Arabic in order to help reduce students' anxiety in applying Arabic. Various methods that can be practiced in today's teaching and learning sessions are in line with the development of digital technology. For example, teachers can create a more interactive learning environment by integrating appropriate technology into the learning experience and using collaborative work strategies among students (Hamzan et. al, 2015). The psychological aspect of students also needs to be given attention by teachers because it affects

the mastery of students' language skills. In addition, the importance of mastering these listening and speaking skills is very important and closely related. Zawawi Ismail et al. (2011) explain listening and speaking skills to be key skills in human interaction. In an effort to improve the achievement and ability of speaking Arabic better and better, students are also encouraged to use appropriate Arabic language learning techniques and strategies to minimize Arabic language anxiety among them. Thus, the ability of students to master the Arabic language in language learning requires continuous effort and support from various parties, especially the school to be realized.

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