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Validity and Reliability of the Arabic Language Engagement, Motivation, and Learning Strategies Instrument among Malaysian Students in the Middle East

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Abstract

Validity and reliability are essential aspects in evaluating the consistency and accuracy of any research instrument. This paper examines the validity and reliability tests conducted on an instrument designed to measure the levels of engagement, motivation, and Arabic language learning strategies among Malaysian students in the Middle East. The questionnaire comprises 65 items categorized into three main constructs. Face and content validity were verified by a panel of five experts in the field of Arabic language to ensure the relevance of each item and the clarity of the instrument for respondents. A total of 35 respondents were randomly selected from third- and fourth-year students majoring in Islamic Studies and Arabic Language at universities in Egypt and Jordan that offer related programmes. Findings from the pilot study revealed that each construct of the instrument demonstrated a very high Cronbach's Alpha (α) coefficient value, ranging from 0.95 to 0.97. These results indicate that the questionnaire used in this study is both valid and reliable for use in the actual research.

Keywords: Validity, Reliability, Research Instrument, Engagement, Motivation, Language Learning Strategies.

Introduction

Arabic is one of the world's native languages, with an estimated 400 million native speakers (National Encyclopedia, 2020). This places Arabic as the sixth most widely spoken language globally (Arsyad Muhammad Ali Ridho et al., 2023). According to Komaruddin (1996), Arabic is often regarded as the *language of religion* among scholars in theology, philosophy, sociology, and linguistics, owing to its pivotal role in facilitating the religious practices of Muslims worldwide. Furthermore, Arabic is the original language of the Qur'an and Hadith, which constitute the primary sources of Islamic teachings (Maskur & Santosa, 2023; Nasri, Muliadi et al., 2024; Syukur, 2015). Hence, a comprehensive command of the Arabic language is vital for understanding the Qur'an, the Hadith, and other Islamic disciplines such as *Fiqh* and *Usul al-Din* (Mohammad Ridwan Razali et al., 2021).

In line with the rapid pace of global development, the significance of the Arabic language extends beyond its traditional religious function. It now contributes to the advancement of various key sectors, including education, tourism, services, culture, and the economy (Mohd Sharizal Nasir et al., 2024). Within the education sector, Arabic has become an important focus across multiple levels of formal education, from preschool and primary school to secondary school, colleges, and universities (Muhammad Sabri, 2015). Moreover, a considerable number of students, particularly from Southeast Asia, choose to pursue their studies in Middle Eastern countries to acquire a deeper knowledge of the Arabic language (Najwa Khasawneh, 2021).

Nevertheless, variations in the Arabic language learning environments between Arab countries—such as Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco—and non-Arab countries like Malaysia present diverse challenges for non-native learners in mastering the language (Shamsuddin & Ahmad, 2019). A conducive learning environment plays a vital role in fostering students' interest and motivation to learn Arabic (Hairun Najuwah Jamli, 2024). Highly motivated learners tend to demonstrate a strong desire to study Arabic diligently and to use it actively in daily communication (Nur Afifah Fadzil et al., 2022). Therefore, effective strategies and pedagogical approaches for enhancing Arabic language learning among students deserve due attention, as they are instrumental in helping learners achieve comprehensive language mastery.

Problem Statement

Language engagement plays a critical role in students' academic success across educational institutions, particularly when the target language is a second or foreign language. For Malaysian students pursuing their studies in Middle Eastern countries, the ability to actively master and use Arabic constitutes a key factor contributing to both academic and social achievement. Despite being immersed in an environment where Arabic is the primary language, students often face various challenges in achieving meaningful language engagement.

One of the primary challenges is the insufficient vocabulary among students, particularly in Classical Arabic (*Fusha*), which is used in religious texts such as *tafsir*, Hadith, and *fiqh*. Vocabulary mastery is a fundamental component of language proficiency and cannot be overlooked in Arabic language learning (Zunita et al., 2016). A limited vocabulary hampers the acquisition of more advanced knowledge in Arabic (Aluwi & Abdul Ghani, 2023). Moreover, students often struggle to comprehend complex terminology used in lectures and reading materials when their vocabulary is inadequate. This limitation also affects their ability to write essays or answer examination questions accurately and in depth. The correct use of specialized terminology is crucial for academic writing, and students lacking sufficient vocabulary encounter difficulties in employing terms appropriately (Sumaiyah Sulaiman et al., 2018; Hasnurol et al., 2020).

A passive attitude toward language use has also been identified as a critical issue. Many students tend to avoid situations that require them to speak Arabic, whether in academic or social contexts. Some students prefer not to respond to instructors' teaching, instead merely listening without active participation (Muhamad Suhaimi Taat & Azlin Ariffin@Riffin, 2020). This behavior may stem from feelings of embarrassment or fear of making mistakes, as

students worry about negative evaluation from lecturers or peers (Rushdi & Asbulah, 2023). Mohd Salikin et al. (2021), citing Nurul Amalia Ruslan et al. (2022), note that the reluctance to speak Arabic both inside and outside the classroom contributes to students' weaknesses in oral proficiency. Furthermore, when instructors frequently rely on translation as a teaching method, it fosters passivity among students toward Arabic learning (Rosni Samah, 2012). Such issues reduce students' language engagement, thereby slowing the language acquisition process, as students miss opportunities to practice oral skills in authentic contexts.

Contextual factors also significantly influence students' language engagement. Even in environments where Arabic is widely used, students often lack opportunities to participate in activities or programs that promote active language use. This situation arises due to several challenges, including limited interaction with the local community and reliance on peers from the same ethnic background. Previous studies indicate that international students who reside primarily among their compatriots tend to use their mother tongue, which can restrict opportunities to practice the target language (Coleman, 2015; Dörnyei, 2020). This phenomenon reflects the challenges highlighted by Coleman (2015), who asserts that learning a language in a foreign environment does not necessarily guarantee active engagement if students are not provided with authentic communicative experiences. Consequently, students require proactive strategies to overcome these barriers and enhance their use of Arabic in daily life.

Research Objective

This study aims to examine the validity and reliability of an instrument developed to assess Arabic language engagement, motivation, and learning strategies among Malaysian students in the Middle East. The instrument was adapted from the *Arabic Learning Motivation Questionnaire* (Sumi & Sumi, 2019), the *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery* (Gardner, 2004), Svalberg's (2018) study, as well as instruments by Lily Hanefarezan Asbulah (2018) and Nazimah Ngah (2011).

Literature Review

Language Engagement

Language engagement has been a focus of scholarly discussion for many years and has received increasing attention over the past 35 years (T. de Vreede, 2019). But what exactly is meant by engagement? According to the *Fourth Edition of Kamus Dewan*, engagement refers to the act of involving oneself (in an association, activity, or matter). In the field of education, where communication occurs between teachers and students in the classroom, Skinner (2009) defines engagement as the quality of students' involvement with educational endeavors, including people, activities, goals, or values that shape the learning process. In other words, engagement in education refers to the relationships and active involvement with various individuals and elements that constitute the educational experience (Svalberg, 2018). In the context of language learning, engagement refers to both the quantity (extent) and quality (type) of students' active participation in performing tasks or learning activities (Kuh, 2009). According to Mercer (2019) and Sinatra et al. (2015), meaningful learning is difficult to achieve if students are not genuinely engaged, even if they appear externally active and committed to the learning process. Svalberg (2018) characterizes language engagement as the process of developing language awareness—that is, "conscious knowledge of one's first language, second language, or language in general"—in which students act as agents while

the language serves as the object (and sometimes also the medium). Language engagement is also considered a key variable that helps explain second language learning processes (Kerney & Barbour, 2015; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Svalberg, 2018).

Language engagement is shaped by several key characteristics. First, it is action-oriented (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). Despite the range of perspectives and definitions, the action-oriented nature of engagement remains consistent across frameworks and definitions (Reschly & Christenson, 2012). Second, engagement is highly context-dependent. A student's engagement does not occur in isolation; it is influenced by culture, community, family, school, peers, classroom environment, and specific tasks or activities within the classroom (Finn & Zimmer, 2012; Pianta et al., 2012; Shernoff, 2013). Third, engagement always involves an object, such as a topic, person, situation, or task. Finally, engagement is dynamic and malleable, shaped by the context, whether in classroom learning or social interactions outside of class.

Moreover, Svalberg (2009) defines language engagement in the context of language learning and use as a cognitive, affective, and/or social process, in which students act as agents while the language serves as the object (and sometimes the medium). These cognitive, affective, and social factors are interdependent and interactive. For example, affective factors can influence cognitive and social engagement, with motivation being one of the most extensively studied affective factors. Similarly, social factors can influence both affective and cognitive engagement. Research by Baralt, Gurzynski-Weiss, and Kim (2016) shows that students who form social relationships with peers are more likely to engage and direct their attention toward language tasks than those who do not. Skinner and Pitzer (2012) also note that students' engagement is often shaped by a conducive learning environment, as well as support from teachers and peers. Students who receive strong social support from teachers tend to exhibit higher emotional and cognitive engagement, which ultimately enhances academic performance. Additionally, Philp and Duchesne (2016) argue that engagement encompasses not only cognitive aspects but also social, behavioral, and affective dimensions in an integrated manner.

Motivation

The term *motivation* originates from the root word *"motive"*, which is defined as an internal force within an individual that drives them to act or perform a task (Hamzah Uno, 2023). Individuals with strong motivation exert considerable effort to achieve their goals (Mubarok, 2019). According to Oxford and Nyikos (1989), motivation is defined as a factor or reason that prompts specific behavior and action. Gardner (1985) further conceptualizes motivation as encompassing effort, desire, underlying reasons for behavior, and affective aspects related to second language learning, highlighting its close connection to the language acquisition process.

Motivation can be categorized into several types. Generally, it is discussed in terms of two primary dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Mottaz, 1985). Intrinsic motivation arises from the fulfillment of an individual's physiological and psychological needs (Rohaty Mohd. Majzub, 1992). This type of motivation is closely linked to internal factors such as needs, interests, curiosity, and personal satisfaction. When a student is driven by intrinsic motivation, no external incentives or coercion are required to complete a task, as the activity

itself fulfills their internal needs and provides personal gratification (Nur Afifah Fadzil et al., 2022).

In contrast, extrinsic motivation originates from external stimuli that prompt individuals to act (Mohammad Shatar Sabran, 2005). Activities driven by extrinsic motivation are typically aimed at obtaining rewards, such as prizes, certificates, praise, avoiding punishment, gaining attention from teachers or peers, or other forms of recognition, often oriented toward short-term personal gain (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Therefore, motivation plays a critical role in the language learning process, as it not only influences students' achievement levels but also determines what, where, and how they learn. In other words, motivation affects learning outcomes, while the learning process itself can, in turn, reinforce and enhance motivation (Ulil Albab, 2019).

Arabic Language Learning Strategies

Research on Language Learning Strategies (LLS) began to emerge as early as the 1970s (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978). Learning strategies are essential tools that assist students in mastering a subject (Mohd Zaki Ismail et al., 2016). The appropriate use of learning strategies can also help language learners accelerate, enhance, and make the language learning process more enjoyable (Oxford, 1990).

Moreover, Oxford (2001) provides a comprehensive definition encompassing various characteristics of LLS. According to her, LLS refers to operations employed by learners to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information; specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, self-directed, effective, and transferable to new situations. This definition is supported by several scholars, including Dörnyei (2005) and Zahra El Aouri et al. (2017). Although definitions vary among researchers, most empirical studies in second language acquisition define language learning strategies as deliberate or inadvertent steps, actions, or behaviors used by language learners to improve their performance, either in developing knowledge or in applying the target language (Fithriyah et al., 2019).

In the context of Arabic language learning, Nik Mohd Rahimi et al. (2008) found that one of the key factors contributing to students' effective mastery of Arabic is the use of effective learning strategies. Anida (2003) similarly asserts that the use of strategies enhances students' abilities not only in speaking skills but also in self-confidence, interest, and attitudes toward learning Arabic. Furthermore, Rachma et al. (2023) argue that learning strategies, particularly in Arabic language education, are crucial for ensuring that the learning process is comprehensible and effectively mastered. The use of appropriate methods and techniques makes learning engaging and helps prevent student boredom. In conclusion, Arabic language learning requires a comprehensive and strategic approach to ensure effective and efficient language mastery.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative research design using a descriptive survey method to obtain a comprehensive overview of the levels of engagement, motivation, and Arabic language learning strategies among students. The research instrument was developed in the

form of a questionnaire and distributed to respondents via the Google Forms platform, enabling data collection in a more systematic and timely manner. All data obtained from the respondents were quantified and analyzed using statistical methods.

Instrument

The development of the research instrument underwent several modifications during the adaptation process to align with the study's context. Once the instrument was finalized, its consistency was assessed through face validity and content validity. In this study, five experts were appointed to evaluate the appropriateness of the content, the use of language and terminology, and the accuracy of the definitions employed in the instrument. Details of the experts selected to assess the content validity are presented in **Figure 1.0**.

Position	**Working Experience**	**Area of Expertise**	**Institution**
Senior Lecturer	Over 20 years	Arabic Language	National University of Malaysia
Lecturer	Over 20 years	Arabic Language	International Islamic University Malaysia
Language Teacher	Over 20 years	Arabic Language	National University of Malaysia
Language Teacher	5-10 years	Arabic Language	National University of Malaysia
Language Teacher	11-15 years	Arabic Language	National University of Malaysia

(Figure 1.0: Details of Experts for Content Validity)

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of two sections: Section A and Section B. Section A comprised four items related to the background of the expert panel, while Section B contained 30 items across three main constructs: Engagement, Motivation, and Learning Strategies. All items were evaluated by the experts using a 4-point scale, where 1 = not relevant, 2 = somewhat relevant, 3 = quite relevant, and 4 = highly relevant. A feedback section was also provided for each construct, allowing experts to suggest modifications and provide comments on the items in the instrument.

Following the expert review, the level of agreement among the experts regarding the content validity of the instrument was assessed using the Content Validity Index (CVI). In this study, the CVI was determined using two methods: the Item-level Content Validity Index (I-CVI) and the Scale-level Content Validity Index (S-CVI). The calculation of the CVI values followed the formula proposed by Polit and Beck (2006), as illustrated in Figure 2.0.

$$\textit{Content Validity Index (CVI)} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained}}{\text{Maximum possible score}}$$

$$\textit{Item Content Validity Index (I-CVI)} = \frac{\text{Number of experts rating item as relevant}}{\text{Total numper of experts}}$$

$$\textit{Scale-level Content Validity Index (S-CVI)} = \frac{\text{Sum of I-CVIs for all items}}{\text{Total number of items}}$$

(Figure 2.0: Formula for Calculating Content Validity Index (CVI)

Shrotryia and Dhanda (2019) emphasize that CVI values of 0.80 and above are considered to indicate clear and high content validity, whereas I-CVI values below 0.70 are regarded as irrelevant or unclear, potentially warranting the removal of the item (Thoyre et al., 2014). According to Polit and Beck (2006), a good S-CVI/Ave value should also exceed 0.80.

Populations and Sample

The respondents in this study comprised 35 Malaysian undergraduate students pursuing studies in Islamic Studies and Arabic language at universities in Egypt and Jordan that offer related programs. This population was selected because both countries are among the primary destinations for Malaysian students seeking higher education, particularly in fields related to Arabic language and Islamic Studies. According to Abu Hanifah Haris (2023), Egypt has historically maintained close ties with the Malay community, and since the early 20th century, the number of Malay students studying in the country has shown a significant increase. Similarly, Nurulasyikin Muda and Hazmi Dahlan (2020) note that, in addition to Egypt, Jordan is also a preferred destination for Malaysian students pursuing studies in various disciplines, including Islamic Studies and Arabic language. Therefore, the selection of this sample is relevant to the scope of the study, which specifically focuses on Malaysian students in the Middle East.

Initially, the researcher contacted the Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of the Malaysian Student Associations in Egypt (by region) and Jordan (by university branch) online to obtain permission to conduct the study. Once approval was obtained from all student representatives, a pilot test was conducted with all respondents within the designated timeframe. All data collected were securely stored and protected to ensure the confidentiality of the study participants.

Findings and Discussion

Validity of the Questionnaire Instrument on Arabic Language Engagement, Motivation, and Learning Strategies

To ensure that the instrument used is appropriate and functions effectively, validity testing was conducted for all items in the questionnaire. According to Yusnan et al. (2024), content validity refers to the extent to which items or questions in a questionnaire accurately measure the concepts they are intended to assess. Consequently, Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend that researchers seek validation from subject-matter experts to evaluate the items contained in a research instrument. At least three experts are required to assess the content validity of test items (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019; Dimopoulos & Pantis, 2003; Lynn, 1986; Makki et al., 2003). In this study, five experts were selected, including senior lecturers, lecturers, and language teachers specializing in Arabic. This number aligns with Lynn's (1986) recommendation, cited in Polit, Beck, and Owen (2007), suggesting that the number of experts should range from three to ten.

Initially, the expert panel was contacted via email to obtain consent and to explain the purpose and procedures of the study. Once consent was obtained, the questionnaire was distributed, and the experts began the process of reviewing and scoring each item according to its relevance. The evaluation of scores provided by the panel revealed that three experts deemed all 65 items relevant for the study, while one expert considered 64 items appropriate for the constructs, and another expert approved 56 items out of the total items in the questionnaire.

Figures 3.0 to Figures 5.0 present the evaluation results for each construct in the research instrument, whereas Figure 6.0 shows the total scores assigned by each expert for all items.

	Construct: Engagement				
Item Code	**Expert 1**	**Expert 2**	**Expert 3**	**Expert 4**	**Expert 5**
B1	1	1	1	1	1
B2	1	1	1	1	1
B3	1	1	1	1	1
B4	1	1	1	1	1
B5	1	1	1	1	1
B6	1	1	1	1	1
B7	0	1	1	1	1
B8	1	1	1	0	1
B9	1	1	1	1	1
B10	1	1	1	1	1
B11	1	1	1	1	1
B12	1	1	1	1	1
B13	1	1	1	0	1
B14	1	1	1	1	1
B15	1	1	1	1	1
B16	1	1	1	1	1
B17	1	1	1	1	1
B18	1	1	1	1	1
B19	1	1	1	1	1
B20	1	1	1	1	1

(Figure 3.0: Expert Evaluation of Items in the Engagement Construct)

	Construct: Motivation				
Item Code	**Expert 1**	**Expert 2**	**Expert 3**	**Expert 4**	**Expert 5**
C1	1	1	1	1	1
C2	1	1	1	1	1
C3	1	1	1	0	1
C4	1	1	1	1	1
C5	1	1	1	1	1
C6	1	1	1	1	1
C7	1	1	1	1	1
C8	1	1	1	0	1
C9	1	1	1	0	1
C10	1	1	1	1	1
C11	1	1	1	1	1
C12	1	1	1	1	1
C13	1	1	1	1	1
C14	1	1	1	1	1
C15	1	1	1	1	1

(Figure 4.0: Expert Evaluation of Items in the Motivation Construct)

	Construct: Language Learning Strategies				
Item Code	**Expert 1**	**Expert 2**	**Expert 3**	**Expert 4**	**Expert 5**
B1	1	1	1	0	1
B2	1	1	1	1	1
B3	1	1	1	1	1
B4	1	1	1	1	1
B5	1	1	1	1	1
B6	1	1	1	1	1
B7	1	1	1	0	1
B8	1	1	1	1	1
B9	1	1	1	1	1
B10	1	1	1	1	1
B11	1	1	1	1	1
B12	1	1	1	0	1
B13	1	1	1	1	1
B14	1	1	1	1	1
B15	1	1	1	0	1
B16	1	1	1	1	1
B17	1	1	1	1	1
B18	1	1	1	1	1
B19	1	1	1	1	1
B20	1	1	1	1	1

(Figure 5.0: Expert Evaluation of Items in the Language Learning Strategies Construct)

Expert	**Expert 1**	**Expert 2**	**Expert 3**	**Expert 4**	**Expert 5**
Total Score of Each Expert	64	65	65	56	65

(Figure 6.0: Total Scores Assigned by Experts for All Items)

Based on the face and content validity assessments conducted by the expert panel, the researcher found that Expert 1 rated one item in the Engagement construct (Item B7: *"I engage with Arabic by reading Arabic books"* as somewhat relevant, assigning it a score of 2, resulting in a total of 64 items approved by this expert. Similarly, Expert 4 rated several items as less relevant. In the Engagement construct, these included Item B8: *"I engage with Arabic by fully concentrating during Arabic learning activities"* and Item B13: *"I engage with Arabic by attempting to respond in class even when it is difficult"*. In the Motivation construct, three items received a score of 2: Item C3: *"I learn Arabic for the satisfaction of mastering difficult Arabic vocabulary"*, Item C8: *"I learn Arabic because I want to become proficient in Arabic vocabulary"*, and Item C9: *"I learn Arabic to gain the experience of performing my best in examinations"*. Several items in the Arabic Language Learning Strategies construct also received the same rating, including Item D1: *"I apply Arabic learning strategies by rereading words I do not understand"*, Item D7: *"I apply Arabic learning strategies by repeatedly pronouncing newly learned words"*, Item D12: *"I apply Arabic learning strategies by inferring the meanings of new words based on prior knowledge"*, and Item D15: *"I apply Arabic learning strategies by ignoring difficult words during Arabic learning"*.

In addition, the expert panel provided recommendations to improve the clarity and appropriateness of the language used in the questionnaire to ensure that the collected data align with the study objectives. For example, Item C1 was revised from *"I learn Arabic because I want to understand the differences between Arabic and Malay"* to *"I learn Arabic because I want to gain a deeper understanding of the uniqueness of the Arabic language"*, emphasizing intrinsic motivation rather than mere language comparison. For Item B7, experts noted that the original phrasing only described the activity without specifying the cognitive skill being measured. They suggested explicitly stating the mental or thinking process involved during reading, such as *"I engage with Arabic by analyzing sentence structures in Arabic"*. Likewise, although experts agreed with Item C4: *"I learn Arabic for the satisfaction of mastering difficult Arabic vocabulary"*, they recommended rephrasing it as *"I learn Arabic to expand my vocabulary beyond what I already know"*.

The calculation of the Content Validity Index (CVI) indicated that all items scored between 0.8 and 1.0. The Scale-level Content Validity Index (S-CVI) was 0.97 for both the Engagement and Learning Strategies constructs, while the Motivation construct recorded an S-CVI of 0.96. Overall, these findings demonstrate that all items in the research instrument possess high content validity and are capable of effectively measuring the intended constructs. A summary of the I-CVI and S-CVI values for each item and construct is presented in **Figure 7.0.**

Constructs/Dimensions	Item Code	I-CVI
Engagement	B1	1.0
	B2	1.0
	B3	1.0
	B4	1.0
	B5	1.0
	B6	1.0
	B7	0.8
	B8	0.8
	B9	1.0
	B10	1.0
	B11	1.0
	B12	1.0
	B13	0.8
	B14	1.0
	B15	1.0
	B16	1.0
	B17	1.0
	B18	1.0
	B19	1.0
	B20	1.0
	S-CVI/Ave	0.97
Motivation	C1	1.0
	C2	1.0
	C3	0.8
	C4	1.0
	C5	1.0
	C6	1.0
	C7	1.0
	C8	0.8
	C9	0.8
	C10	1.0
	C11	1.0
	C12	1.0
	C13	1.0
	C14	1.0
	C15	1.0
	S-CVI/Ave	0.96
Language Learning Strategies	D1	0.8
	D2	1.0
	D3	1.0
	D4	1.0
	D5	1.0
	D6	1.0
	D7	0.8
	D8	1.0
	D9	1.0
	D10	1.0
	D11	1.0
	D12	0.8
	D13	1.0

	D14	1.0
	D15	0.8
	D16	1.0
	D17	1.0
	D18	1.0
	D19	1.0
	D20	1.0
	D21	1.0
	D22	1.0
	D23	1.0
	D24	1.0
	D25	1.0
	D26	1.0
	D27	1.0
	D28	1.0
	D29	1.0
	D30	1.0
	S-CVI/Ave	0.97

(Figure 7.0: Summary Table of I-CVI and S-CVI Values)

Reliability of the Questionnaire Instrument on Engagement, Motivation, and Arabic Language Learning Strategies

To assess the consistency and reliability of the research instrument, a pilot study was conducted with 35 respondents, in line with Cooper and Schindler's (2011) recommendation that an appropriate sample size for a pilot study ranges from 25 to 100 participants. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 30.0 was employed in this study, focusing on the Cronbach's Alpha (α) reliability coefficient obtained from the analysis of all items in the instrument. Figure 8.0 presents the Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct in the research instrument.

Constructs	**Number of Items**	***Alpha Cronbach's* (α)**
B	20	0.953
C	15	0.953
D	30	0.970
Total	65	0.977

(Figure 8.0: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients from the Pilot Study**)**

The pilot study analysis revealed that each construct in the instrument demonstrated very high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.95 to 0.97. Overall, the reliability coefficient for all items across Constructs B, C, and D was 0.977. These results indicate that the instrument is suitable and reliable for use in the main study, consistent with Hair et al. (2014), who assert that a well-constructed study should have a Cronbach's Alpha exceeding 0.7. Additionally, Sekaran (1992) suggests that an acceptable reliability coefficient should range between 0.60 and 0.80, whereas values below 0.60 are considered weak and unacceptable. Therefore, the findings of this pilot study confirm that all items in the research instrument are appropriate and can be applied in the actual study.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that engagement, motivation, and learning strategies are crucial aspects of language learning, particularly in Arabic. The development of these research instruments has demonstrates their capability to accurately and effectively measure the three components, which is essential to ensure reliable and high-quality research findings. Accordingly, the primary objective of this study was to determine the validity and reliability of a questionnaire instrument that was adapted and modified from several previous instruments to suit the context of Malaysian students studying at universities in the Middle East. The findings indicate that the instrument developed by the researcher possesses high validity and reliability and is suitable for use in the main study. Therefore, this study is expected to fill an existence gap in the literature and serve as a reference for future researchers in developing higher-quality research instruments.

This study also has several limitations. The respondents were limited to Malaysian third- and fourth-year students at universities in Egypt and Jordan. Accordingly, the researcher recommends that future studies employ different methods, such as longitudinal designs, to examine the changes, development, or impact of engagement, motivation, and Arabic language learning strategies more comprehensively from the first to the final year of study.

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