THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT TOWARD STUDYING ARABIC GRAMMAR IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract
This paper investigated the relationship between motivation and achievement toward studying Arabic grammar in Malaysia. The participants in this study were 100 Malaysian students attending secondary school in Kolej Islam Sultan Alam Shah (SMBP) (Form Four) were selected to complete a questionnaire to determine their motivation toward learning Arabic grammar. Also, the students had completed the tests to determine their achievement in Arabic grammar. Descriptive statistics was used to determine the relationship between the independent variable motivation and the dependent variable achievement and the statistical results demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between motivation and achievement toward studying Arabic grammar. Also, the result showed that there are no significant differences between males and females in motivation and achievement toward studying Arabic grammar. Finally, the result showed that the Malay students have very high motivation and positive attitudes toward learning Arabic Grammar.

Field of Research: Motivation, Achievement, Arabic Language.

1. Introduction
In the 14th century, Islam was introduced to the Malay people by traders who came from Islamic countries and Islam spread and became the religion of the Malay people. Since then and after the Malays embraced Islam as their religion, the Arabic language became of great value and importance among them. In fact, in order to perform their daily worship and prayers, verses of the Holy Qur’an in Arabic must be recited. More than that, they are obliged and highly recommended to know how to recite the holy book (Al-Qur’an) as well as memorize some parts of it in order to perform their prayers. So, Malay parents encouraged their children from an early age to learn how to read Arabic in order to know how to read the Al-Qur’an, pray and learn the basic rules of Islam by sending them to religious schools or places called Madrasah (Hawatemehe, 2000; Obeidat, 2005; Baharudin, et al., 2008).

It is a fact that motivation plays a vital role in learning processes and learning any second language (Dörnyei, 1994; 1998; Reynolds, 1991; Kondor, 2007; Li & Pan, 2009; Mahadi & Jafari, 2012) as each language has its own grammar and structures which appear as mandatory parts for the students to focus on. In any case, that concept is applied to the Arabic language which has its very own structure and complex grammar. Beside that, the Arabic language has theories which explain the grammar and the conflict between scholars (Ismail & pa, 2006; Madkour, 2010; Yaacob & Fadilah, 2014).

Nevertheless, the Arabic Language is rich in grammar and vocabulary that make it an even more challenging language to be taught and learned in terms of grammar. Also, it can be found that a lot of students from different parts of the word look at the Arabic Language as a difficult subject and learning...

In fact, students become more motivated to learn any second language if they are motivated and interested in the target language, but if the students are not interested in that language or they are not motivated toward the language of that community, they will never learn that language because learning any foreign language is based on a student’s level of motivation toward the target language (Reynolds, 199; Gardner, 1972).

In addition, some students have aims to achieve. Their desire for success motivates them to accomplish every task no matter what the task is or the difficulties involved in completing it. Others also would need to be successful, but consider the value of the task before attempting it. If the student feels the task has no value, the student chooses not to do the task, even though they are perfectly capable of accomplishing the task (Zenzen, 2002). This statement supports the notion that there are inherent risks in every task. Some people take the challenge to face the risks; some others might avoid the task because they do not dare to take any risk. Hence, if the student is motivated to learn the Arabic language, he or she will achieve more compared to those students who are not motivated.

Consequently, motivation is the key to students’ achievements as it has been shown in the literature that all students are influenced by the motivation to achieve and succeed (Atkinson, 1999; Spence, 1983).

When the students’ beliefs, abilities and expectancy of success toward any subject are high their motivation and achievement become high but if they keep looking at a subject as a difficult subject their beliefs and abilities toward that subject are low. Consequently, students’ expectation of success is also low (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995).

Some studies have found that there is a positive relationship between motivation and achievement so the students with high motivation spend more energy and complete their task, consequently their achievement becomes more compared to students with low motivation (Keith & Cool, 1992; Klinger, 1966; Roger, 2009; Shawashreh, 2007; Trautwein, et. al. 2006; Li & Pan, 2009; Alkhasawneh, 2012).

If we go back to the history of the Arabic language, we will realize that most of the Arabic language scientists were not originally Arabs, yet they succeeded and became Arabic language scholars because they loved what they were doing and they were motivated enough and determined to succeed. Among those scholars were ‘Syboaity’ who was not an Arab but actually a Persian. He had a strong motivation to learn Arabic which pushed him to write books about Arabic grammar from then until now he is famous and well-known as a primary source to be referred to by Arabic grammar learners (Al-Bkaa, 2002).

In Malaysia, a lot of students look at the Arabic language and its grammar as a difficult subject. Consequently, their motivation and achievement is lower in the Arabic language than in the other subjects because of their belief that they will not understand what is being taught (Hussin, 2000).

Another challenge that Malay learners face is the pronunciation of the Arabic language. The Arabic language has many alphabetical unique sounds which pose a challenge for learners to pronounce the Arabic words correctly. The reason is that these sounds are not common in the other languages such as Malay. Nevertheless, the Malay language has extra letters like ch, g, nya, p, v, which are not found in the Arabic language and these extra letters make Arabic language difficult for Malay learners when they
write Arabic (Ismail & Pa, 2006). As such there is a general perception among the Malay students that the Arabic Language is the most difficult subject (Jassem, 2000).

Due to the fact that the Arabic language in Malaysia is necessary for the Malay Muslims, it is taught at all levels from primary to secondary school, and yet generally the students’ performance is still weak and not satisfactory (Hawatemeh, 2000; Abdul-Hamed, 2004).

2. Methodology

A quantitative research design – correlation and comparison - has been utilized in this paper to determine the relationships between research variables; motivation and achievement in studying the Arabic Language for non-native speakers in a secondary school in Selangor, Malaysia. The data were collected through the survey by distributing the questionnaire. Creswell (2008) asserted that correlational designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators measure the degree of relationship between variables.

3. Population and Sampling procedure

The population in this research is attending secondary school in Kolej Islam Sultan Alam Shah (SMBP) (Form Four), which teaches the Arabic language as a subject. The sample for this research is four intact classes (n=100). The four classes were randomly allocated into control and experimental groups.

4. Data Collection

The Questionnaire was conducted in a Malaysian secondary school to determine the relationship between motivation and achievement toward studying Arabic Grammar. A sample of 100 students attending in Form Four was selected to complete the questionnaire in order to evaluate the relationship. The researcher adapted an instrumental questionnaire by Mori (2004) and Motivational Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; Pintrich, et al., 1993) based on expectancy theory for Eccles and Wigfield (1995). The questionnaire has seven dimensions of motivation: attainment value, study habits, extrinsic value, intrinsic value, cost value, ability beliefs, and expectancy of success. The questionnaire contains 39 items and is scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

5. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by SPSS using standard summary statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages). The relationship between students' Achievement in Grammar and independent variables motivation was examined by using Pearson Product-Moment correlation to measure the degree of linear relationship between Dependent variable, achievement in Arabic grammar and Independent variable, motivation.
6. Results

This paper discusses the relationship between motivation and achievement in grammar in Arabic Language for non-native speakers and the result showed that there is positive relationship between motivation and achievement in Arabic grammar. To evaluate this relationship the researcher used Pearson Product-Moment correlation to measure the degree of linear relationship between the Dependent variable, achievement in Arabic grammar and Independent variable, motivation.

The finding revealed that there is significant relationship $R=.314^*$. Table 1.1 shows the degree of relationship between independent and dependent variables. A correlation coefficient of $R=.314^*$ indicates a medium positive relationship between the two variables, based on Cohen’s (1988) guidelines. The result is presented in Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.314**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As can be seen from the table above there is a significant relationship between motivation and achievement $R=.314^*$ and the decision was to accept the hypothesis.

In addition the result showed that there is no significant difference between males and females in motivation toward studying Arabic Grammar. An independent sample t-test was used to compare the mean scores between the males and females. Table 2.1 below illustrate the result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>146.361</td>
<td>10.363</td>
<td>-.289</td>
<td>.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>147.000</td>
<td>11.567</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$P>.05$

According to Table 1.2 there is no significant difference in motivation between males ($M=146.361$, $SD=10.363$) and females ($M=147.00$, $SD=11.567$); $t (-.289); p>.05$. The mean scores of motivation for the males and females are almost the same and show that there is no significant difference between males and females in motivation toward studying the Arabic Language.
7. Discussion

This paper explained the relationship between motivation and achievement toward studying Arabic grammar and the result showed that there is a positive relationship between the independent variable, achievement and dependent variable, motivation. This result agrees with the results research by some others (Keith & Cool, 1992; Klinger, 1966; Roger, 2009; Shawashreh, 2007; Trautwein, et al., 2006; Li & Pan, 2009; Alkhasawneh, 2012).

Nevertheless, this paper gives a consistent picture of Malay students having high motivation toward learning the Arabic Language. This result supports the findings of Hawatemeh,(2000); Abdul-Hamed (2004); Obeida,(2005); Zubairi and Sarudin (2009) and Abu-Bakar et. Al. (2009).

As regard gender and back ground of the family, the result found that there are no significant differences between them toward learning Arabic language. This result is similar with Obeidat (2005).

In fact, motivation is an important factor in learning a foreign language regardless of how complex the target language is. Therefore it is important to know and realize the reason for some choices made by students as a reason for them to learn the Arabic Language. Understanding the real motivation/ behind studying the Arabic language helps to increase students’ performance by influencing the students’ decisions based on their knowledge on motivation of achievement.

Students should learn Arabic grammar in order to master the skills of the Arabic language such as; writing and speaking. If the students are not taught grammar formally, their linguistic skills will not develop properly (Taha, 1995).

8. Conclusion

In short, based on the discussion of the finding, this study concludes that there is a positive relationship between motivation and achievement toward studying the Arabic language and its grammar as a foreign language. Therefore, this study found that Malaysian Form Four students in Kolej Islam Sultan Alam Shah have a high motivation to learn the Arabic Language.

References


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