

## Arabic Verbal Communication Among Malaysian Taxi Drivers At KLIA: Contexts, Grammatical Structures, and Learning Needs

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### Abstract

This study investigates Arabic verbal communication among Malaysian taxi drivers at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), focusing on communicative contexts, grammatical structures, and learning needs within the Tourism Taxi Ambassadors program. Anchored in Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) framework of necessities, lacks, and wants, the study aims to (i) identify real-life situations where communication in Arabic occurs between drivers and Arab tourists, (ii) determine the core vocabulary and grammatical structures required for effective interaction, and (iii) explore the drivers' preferred methods for language acquisition. A qualitative approach was adopted, involving focused group interviews with six experienced Malaysian taxi drivers from AIRPORT LIMO (M) SDN BHD. Data were coded and analyzed using ATLAS.ti 7.1.4. Findings revealed 24 recurring communicative situations that span three primary functions: social (e.g., greetings), professional (e.g., providing directions or services), and promotional (e.g., introducing tourist attractions). While drivers possess limited Arabic proficiency, their communication needs demand specific lexical and grammatical competence, particularly in functional sentence patterns commonly used in tourism discourse. The study further identified six preferred learning strategies, including mobile-assisted tools and situational learning materials, reflecting professional requirements and individual learning preferences. This research offers practical insights for designing Arabic training modules tailored to taxi drivers' linguistic realities and learning styles. It contributes to the broader field of Arabic for Specific Purposes (ASP) and workplace-based language instruction.

**Keywords:** Arabic Verbal Communication; Workplace Arabic; Language Needs Analysis; Taxi Drivers; Islamic Tourism.

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism in Malaysia has become a significant resource that contributes substantially to the economy. The prospects for Malaysian tourism, especially among Arab tourists, are promising based on recent studies and trends. Malaysia has been actively promoting halal tourism to cater to Muslim tourists, especially those from the Middle East (Alam, 2024). Thus, since 2014, the Malaysian government, represented by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia and the Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board, has been continuing to make diligent efforts to attract more local and foreign tourists. It was done by intensifying its tourism programs and diversifying its distinctive campaigns, such as the "Visit Malaysia 2014" campaign targeting 28 million tourists in 2014, with tourism sector revenues reaching 168 billion Malaysian Ringgit (Aswaq. 2014, p. 11). Hence, recent years have seen a notable increase in the number of high-spending

Arab tourists visiting Malaysia (Daud et al., 2021). Malaysia consistently experiences a tangible increase in the number of Arab tourists due to factors such as the friendliness of the local population (29.6%), modern cities (20.1%), greenery (16.7%), safety and security (7.2%) (Abdul Ghani Abu, 2013; Ali Salman & Mohd Safar Hashim, 2012). Furthermore, the September 11, 2001, incident has made Arab tourists inclined to visit countries that offer better security and peace for their leisure travels.

Efforts are being made to understand and meet the needs of Arab tourists, with research focusing on factors influencing their loyalty towards tourism in Malaysia (Atiq & Sharif, 2018). The efforts include enhancing Malaysia's human resources, particularly those working directly in tourism. They need to possess linguistic proficiency to enable effective communication with Arab tourists in classical Arabic while considering their communication culture. Their ability to communicate in Arabic is now more urgent than ever, as they need to provide the best reception and hospitality and meet their professional needs. In short, the potential of the Arabic language in the Malaysian tourism industry has been crucial (Zin et al., 2013). Leading this group, as the current study suggests, are taxi drivers, as they are often the first point of contact for Arab tourists arriving at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA). Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia is keenly interested in its prominent role in Malaysian tourism, exemplified by the "Tourism Taxi Ambassadors" (TTA) program. This unique program aims to raise awareness among taxi drivers and operators of their vital role in promoting Malaysia to increase the number of inbound tourists (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, January 29, 2014).

It is evident that they play a crucial role in Malaysian tourism, and it is often through them that Arab tourists form their initial impressions of Malaysia, whether positive or negative. Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak emphasized that a taxi driver who conducts himself with care and discipline plays a significant role in the Malaysian tourism sector. He encouraged them to smile and be hospitable when interacting with tourists. He stated, "When you receive payment, say 'terima kasih', which means thank you" (Sinar Harian Online, July 18, 2013). Datuk Rais Yatim, the patron of the Malaysian Taxi Drivers and Operators Organization (PETEKMA), highlighted the significant role of taxi drivers in Malaysian tourism. He emphasized the need to enhance their professional status in appreciation of their service (Sinar Harian Online, April 13, 2013). Teaching them Arabic for professional and tourist purposes could be a linguistic program that helps them achieve this. However, the design of such education must begin with a clear understanding of their linguistic needs for using this language in specific situations. It should provide them with a list of common vocabulary and language structures necessary for all oral communication between them and Arab tourists. This matter addresses their educational interests and satisfies their professional needs, mainly since they serve as Malaysia's ambassadors and first impressions matter significantly.

This research emphasizes the importance of their role in Malaysian tourism and their natural need to use the Arabic language in their work, in addition to their profession as the drivers of this industry. In line with this context, the study sets out to achieve three primary objectives: (i) to identify the real-life communication situations in which Malaysian taxi drivers at KLIA engage with Arab tourists, (ii) to determine the specific Arabic vocabulary and grammatical structures they possess and those they lack in

fulfilling these communicative functions, and (iii) to explore their preferred learning methods for acquiring relevant language skills suited to their occupational needs.

## METHOD

The current study employs the primary qualitative research method, which aims to gain a deep understanding of the social context and activities under investigation as perceived by the study participants themselves. This method also helps in revealing how people ascribe meaning to their lives and experiences, which can then be interpreted (Merriam, 2009). In this study, interviews are conducted as the primary data collection method. DeMarrais (2004) defined interviews as interactions in which researchers and research participants engage in dialogue based on the study's research questions (Merriam, 2009). These interviews are conducted face-to-face in a focus group format, involving six taxi drivers from the Malaysian TTA program who have substantial experience dealing with Arab tourists at KLIA.

The decision to use a focus group format with six participants aligns with the recommendations of Nick Moore (2000), who suggested that the number of participants in focus group interviews should range from 5 to 8. This range is considered optimal because having fewer than five participants can make it challenging to obtain sufficient data for the study. On the other hand, having more than eight participants can complicate the management and control of discussions during the interview. Additionally, some participants may need more opportunities to express their opinions in larger groups.

Creswell (2012) highlighted that this form of interview yields a wealth of information, making it useful when time is limited and research participants may be hesitant to share information. The interview questions used in this study are semi-structured, beginning with a set of main questions about how taxi drivers interact or deal with Arabic-speaking passengers or tourists. For example, participants are asked to describe the situations in which oral communication in the Arabic language is required from them as taxi drivers (TTA) based on their experiences and to identify the frequently used words and phrases they need when dealing with Arabic-speaking passengers in those situations. The data collected through these interviews will be analyzed using the software program ATLAS.ti, version 7.1.4, to extract the study's findings through several steps, starting with:

1. Data Coding: Coding can be done using *a priori* coding, where codes are established based on the study's research questions, or through *emergent* coding, where codes are developed after reading the entire text. It typically encompasses three levels: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.
2. Open coding involves breaking down data into initial codes without predetermined categories, allowing new themes and ideas to emerge.
3. Axial coding focuses on establishing connections between categories and subcategories, creating a more structured and organized coding system.
4. Selective coding involves selecting the most significant codes and developing a coherent narrative or theory based on the interconnected categories.

These coding levels help organize and analyze qualitative data effectively, facilitating the extraction of meaningful insights and patterns from the information gathered.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data using computer software such as "ATLAS.ti," the results can be presented according to the sequence of questions in this study. Therefore, the results of this analysis will be illustrated in three main axes, which are:

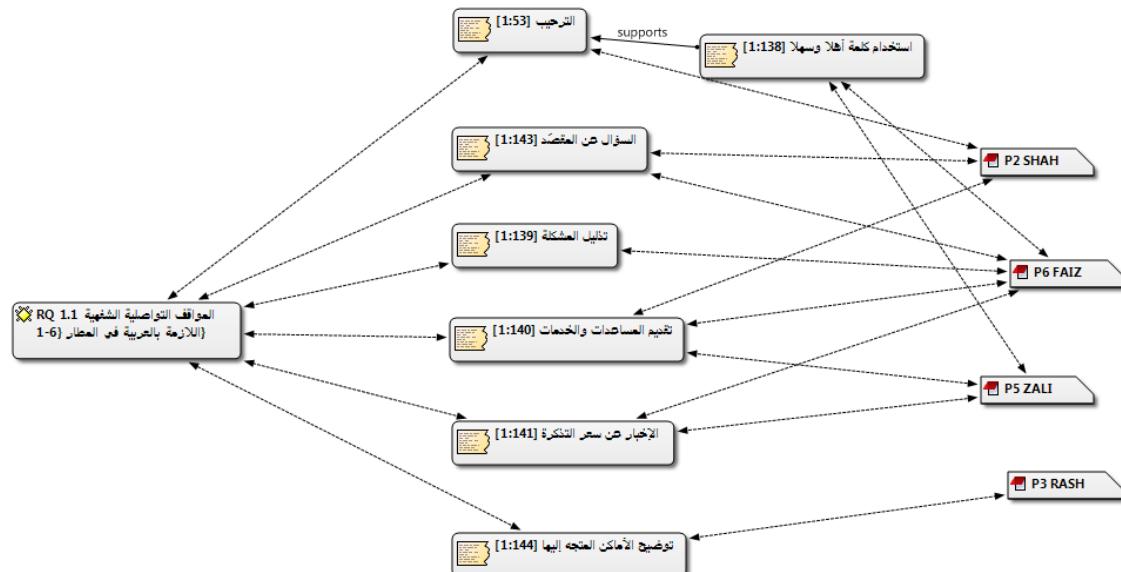
1. Communication Situations and Challenges: This axis will delve into the specific situations where taxi drivers interact with Arab tourists, highlighting the challenges they face during these interactions. It will provide insights into the real-life communication scenarios these drivers encounter.
2. Vocabulary and Common Phrases: This axis will focus on the vocabulary and common phrases essential for effective communication with Arab tourists. It will highlight the linguistic elements necessary for successful interactions and transactions with this group.
3. Language Proficiency and Training Needs: This axis will address taxi drivers' Arabic language proficiency and specific training needs. It will reveal whether they require language training to improve their ability to cater to Arab tourists effectively.

By organizing the results into these three axes, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the language and communication aspects of taxi services for Arab tourists in Malaysia.

### Communication Situations: Contextualized Necessities

These situations can be summarized in three key locations: at the airport (KLIA), during the journey inside the taxi, and upon reaching the destination or tourist spot. As is known, Malaysian taxi drivers (participants in this study) are first exposed to their passengers or Arab tourists upon their arrival in Malaysia at KLIA. In other words, oral communication between them begins with the reception at the airport. According to the pre-conducted interview, the situations that require these drivers to speak in the Arabic language with Arab passengers at the airport revolve around six fundamental situations, as presented by the "ATLAS.ti" analysis in the following figure:

Figure 1. Oral Communication Situations Necessary in Arabic at the Airport (KLIA)



The figure above indicates that Malaysian taxi drivers' necessity of using the Arabic language for oral communication with Arab passengers or tourists at the airport

(KLIA) manifests itself explicitly in six situations. These situations are in the following order of occurrence:

1. Greeting: According to the interview, despite the limited duration of oral communication between them at the airport due to their lack of proficiency in the Arabic language, the study participants consider welcoming expressions like "أهلاً وسهلاً" (Ahlan Wa Sahlan) to be necessary for initiating their communication with Arab passengers at the airport, along with general greetings like "السلام عليكم" (Al-Salamu 'Alaykum). Shah emphasized this in his experience when picking up Arab passengers at KLIA, saying:

"We only say "أهلاً وسهلاً" (Ahlan wa Sahlan) to them. As for the rest of the oral communication, it does not occur. We do not understand it, and we do not speak Arabic." As acknowledged by Zali (QU: 466-474) and Faiz (QU: 470) when asked about the necessity of using "أهلاً وسهلاً" in this situation.

Researcher: Additionally, do you need welcoming phrases like "أهلاً وسهلاً"?"

Zali: We also need them.

Faiz: We need them.

Zali: If we look at the Arabs, we see that they greet us, so we should respond with greetings and welcoming phrases. That's all. (QU: 462-474)

2. The question about the destination, meaning the place they want to go, is the most crucial in the airport as well, which the Malaysian taxi driver must address to Arab passengers. As mentioned by Zali (QU: 406) and Shah (QU: 414) regarding the common question asked of them at the airport by Arab passengers, the place they want to go is usually the hotel.

Zali: So, we should ask them, "Where do you want to go?" This is the first thing.

Researcher: Okay, typically at the airport, what will they ask you?

Shah: At the beginning, they will ask about the hotel. We will need to ask them, "Which hotel do you want to go to?" (QU: 406-414)

3. Addressing the problem of not knowing the destination: This problem usually confronts Arab passengers or tourists who come to Malaysia for the first time and have no prior experience staying here. It often arises after they arrive at the airport and also at the hotel. This problem becomes significant when they hesitate to ask or seek help from those around them out of fear of deceit and fraud (Faiz, QU: 362-365). Therefore, Arabic oral communication enables taxi drivers to assist in overcoming such problems.

"...The first situation I observe is that when Arabs arrive here for the first time, they may be puzzled. They won't know where to go because they only have a paper from the tourism agency with the name of the hotel they should go to. After their arrival and once they get out of the taxi and take their luggage, they often wonder how to get to the hotel. We want to assist them, but they hesitate to accept help out of fear of deceit and fraud. Indeed, this has frequently happened with them..." (Faiz. QU: 362-365)

4. Offering assistance and services. After the destination is determined, the situation that requires Malaysian taxi drivers to communicate in Arabic with Arab tourists is one where assistance and services are provided, such as taking their luggage to the taxi. Arab tourists rarely ask for or order it from the drivers; they often handle it themselves unless they have many bags or are women. All of this is typically done using sign language or body language (Faiz, Zali, Shah. QU: 422-446).

“Researcher: Do Arab passengers instruct you to take their luggage to the taxi?

Faiz, Zali, Shah: Rarely, very rarely.

Faiz: Arab passengers seldom give us such instructions; they usually take their luggage to the taxi themselves. However, it is customary for us to help with that. If they can manage one bag by themselves, there is no problem. But they typically ask for assistance when they have many large bags, or if the passengers are women.

Zali: If they can communicate with us, they would usually ask, "Can you help me?"—and that's it.

Faiz: However, they often prefer to use body language rather than speaking with us. Nonetheless, we understand their request for assistance.

Zali: It has become our duty to try to understand them and assist them.

Shah: It is essential that we communicate with them in Arabic to provide the best help possible.” (Faiz; Zali; Shah. QU: 422-446)

5. Informing about the ticket price. In addition to what was mentioned before, there is another critical situation that requires Malaysian taxi drivers to use the Arabic language for oral communication at the airport, and that is to inform passengers about the fare. This situation is to overcome the failure of oral communication in Arabic, as they primarily rely on English language communication using technological tools on their smartphones, such as electronic calculators and machine translation. This matter was confirmed by Faiz and Zali in the previous interview segments as follows:

“Faiz: No, Arab passengers or tourists do not speak Arabic but use translation apps on their mobile phones to communicate with us. They read the translation—some of it is understandable, and some is not. Once I understand what they mean, I respond in English. (laughs)

Researcher: Oh, so communication happens this way?

Faiz: Yes, through translation. We use our mobile phones to facilitate communication. It's difficult to talk directly, so we use the phone to show them what we mean after translating.

Researcher: Even showing it this way? (laughs)

Faiz: Actually, they are often the ones who show us first. They hear what I'm saying but don't understand it, so we use the phone to write things down. For instance, if they want to ask about the ticket price for the daily tour, we write RM 400. (laughs) They pay this amount. This is one of the communication methods I use with Arab passengers.

Zali: So, asking about the ticket price and places.” (Faiz; Zali. QU: 860-884)

6. Explaining the destinations and tourist attractions in Malaysia. The interview also revealed that clarifying the destinations and tourist attractions in Malaysia is one of the essential oral communication situations in the Arabic language at the airport. Furthermore, it is considered a form of respect for Arab tourists (Rash. QU: 79).

“Rash: This is fundamental. Explaining the places they want to go to, such as the hotel, or providing more information about them is essential. At the very least, it shows them respect.” (Rash. QU: 79)

The first major finding—24 identified situations across three key locations (at KLIA, during the ride, and at the destination)—reveals that Malaysian taxi drivers must engage in Arabic for three primary communicative functions: social, professional, and promotional. These align with the real-world *necessities* of their job. Social greetings

(e.g., “أهلاً وسهلاً”, “السلام عليكم”, questions about destinations, clarification of tourist concerns, and even simple promotional dialogue about attractions reflect pragmatic communicative exchanges crucial for effective service delivery (Long, 2005; Paltridge & Starfield, 2013).

This mirrors findings in previous ESP studies, where the effectiveness of service-oriented communication depended not on full fluency but on task-specific language (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Thus, drivers' engagement with Arab tourists demands not general proficiency but targeted lexical and grammatical competence, underscoring the need for *contextualized language training* (Basturkmen, 2010).

### 1. Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary: The Lingual Lacks.

The second question of this study aims to identify the Arabic vocabulary or phrases known and used by Malaysian taxi drivers before interacting orally with Arab passengers or tourists. It also seeks to identify what they do not know but need to know in order to build oral communication in Arabic with them.

### The Vocabulary Or Common Phrases Known And Used By Malaysian Taxi Drivers

Figure 2. The Arabic Vocabulary or Phrases Known By Malaysian Taxi Drivers

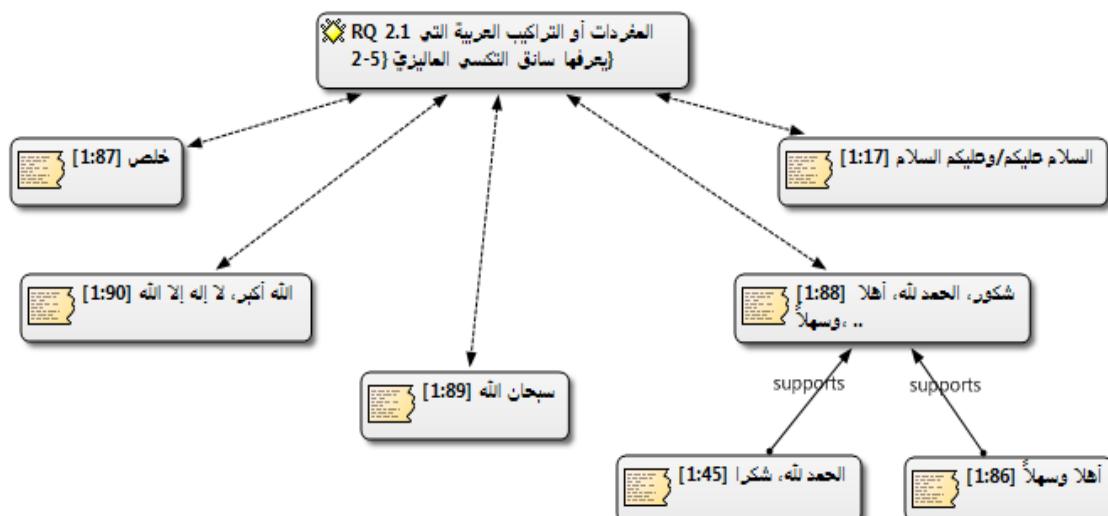


Figure 2 above indicates a good set of Arabic vocabulary and phrases that Malaysian taxi drivers know, and they may use them in necessary oral communication situations in Arabic. Most of these words and phrases focus on greetings, welcoming, and shared religious expressions. They can be listed as follows:

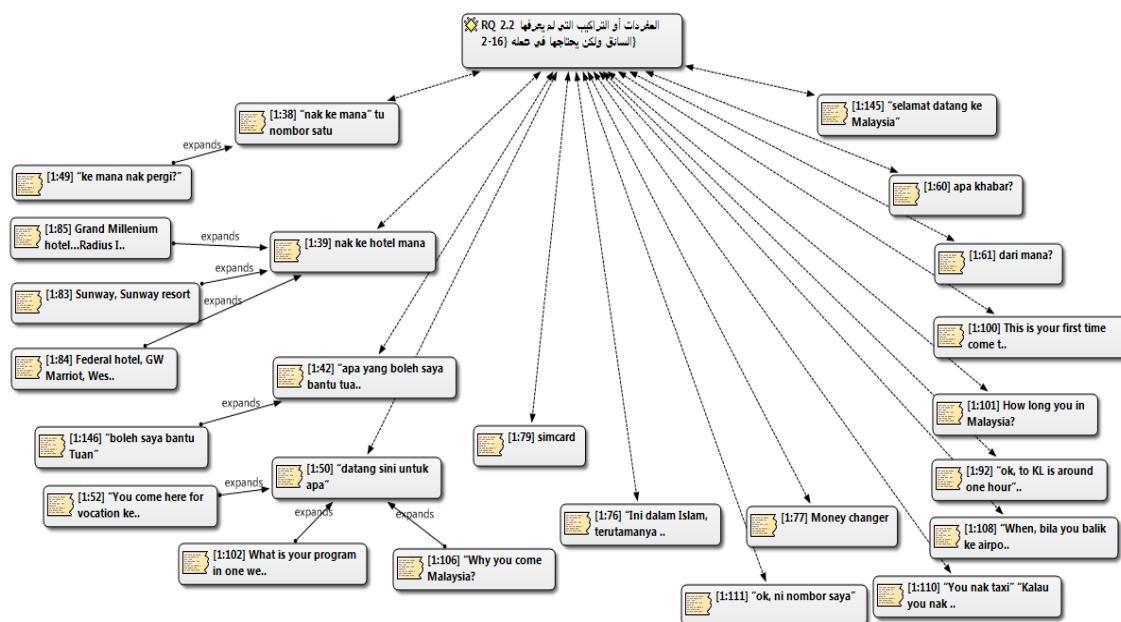
1. السلام عليكم (Peace be upon you).
2. وعليكم السلام (And peace be upon you).
3. شكور/شكراً (Thank you).
4. أهلاً وسهلاً (Welcome).
5. الحمد لله (All praise is due to Allah).
6. الله أكبر (Allah is great).
7. لا إله إلا الله (There is no God except Allah).
8. ما شاء الله (As Allah wills).
9. خلص (It is finished).

Indeed, the limited Arabic vocabulary and phrases listed suggest that Malaysian taxi drivers may need help in oral communication with Arabic-speaking passengers or tourists. Having a limited linguistic repertoire can make it challenging to engage in more

complex conversations or understand diverse customer needs and preferences. It is essential for taxi drivers working in areas with a significant Arabic-speaking population or tourism to expand their language skills to serve their customers better.

### The Common Vocabulary Or Phrases That They Do Not Know But May Need To Use In The Three Previous Checkpoints

Figure 4. The Arabic Vocabulary Or Phrases That Malaysian Taxi Drivers Do Not Know But Are Needed And Essential



The above figure refers to a list of vocabulary and phrases that Malaysian taxi drivers do not know in Arabic but are in dire need of using in the communication scenarios mentioned earlier. This list can be presented with their Arabic equivalents as follows:

Table 1. List Of Vocabulary And Phrases That Malaysian Taxi Drivers Do Not Know In Arabic But Are In Dire Need Of Using Them

No.	Vocabulary and Phrases needed	Arabic Equivalent
1.	Welcome to Malaysia	أهلاً وسهلاً في ماليزيا
2.	How are you?	كيف حالك؟
3.	Where are you from?	من أين حضرتكم؟
4.	Where do you want to go?	إلى أين تريده الذهاب؟
5.	Is this your first time coming to Malaysia?	هل زيارتك ماليزيا أول مرة؟
6.	How long will you be in Malaysia?	كم يوماً تبقى في ماليزيا؟
7.	Okay, to KL is around one hour.	نعم، الطريق إلى كوالالمبور يستغرق الساعة تقريباً
8.	When will you go to the airport?	متى ترجع إلى المطار؟
9.	Do you want a taxi? If so, when should I come?	هل تريدين التكسي؟ إن أردت، سوف آتيك، متى؟
10.	Money Changer	الصرافة
11.	Okay, this is my number.	حسناً، هذا رقمي
12.	It is prohibited in Islam and in Malaysia.	هذا في الإسلام ولا سيما في ماليزيا، ممنوع

الشريحة / بطاقة SIM	Simcard	13.
لأي غرض تأتي إلى ماليزيا؟ -تأتي هنا للمهنة أو للعمل؟ -لماذا تأتي إلى ماليزيا؟ -ماذا برنامحك للأسبوع؟	For what purpose did you come to Malaysia? - "Do you come here for vocation, or for work?" -Why did you come to Malaysia? -What is your plan for this one week?	14.
ماذا أستطيع أن أساعدك؟ أي خدمة؟	How can I assist you? Is there anything I can help you with?	15.
إلى أي فندق؟	Which hotel do you want to go to? -Sunway Resort, Federal Hotel, GW Marriot, Western Hotel, Grand Millenium Hotel, Radius International Hotel	16.

This study revealed these two vocabularies lists and phrases that Malaysian taxi drivers know and do not know in Arabic. There is a significant linguistic gap between them, leading to the failure of oral communication in Arabic. The results indicate a stark contrast between the few Arabic phrases the drivers already know, and a broader, functional vocabulary set they require to operate confidently. While religious expressions and greetings are familiar, task-specific expressions such as giving directions, explaining prices, and offering help are often missing. This aligns with Hutchinson and Waters' concept of *lacks*, where learners are aware of their linguistic gaps but may lack clear guidance to overcome them.

Importantly, this vocabulary gap reflects a deeper need for understanding functional grammar—the ability to form appropriate questions (“إلى أين ترید الذهاب؟؟”), offer help (“ماذا أستطيع أن أساعدك؟؟”), or make polite inquiries. This substantiates the role of Nahu Wazifi (functional grammar) as a pedagogical approach that prioritizes usage over rule-based instruction, especially in oral domains (Al-Khawaldeh & Al-Ali, 2012). Moreover, the reliance on translation apps and gestures indicates a breakdown in verbal interaction—a concern that echoes prior research on service workers' communicative struggles with international tourists (Kim & Jang, 2016). This deficiency not only undermines tourist satisfaction but also marginalizes the drivers from fulfilling their ambassadorial roles.

### Preferred Learning Methods: Expressed Wants and Adult Learning Principles

The preferred method for these taxi drivers to learn Arabic vocabulary and phrases is through six teaching and learning methods: mobile phones or smartphones, dictionaries, CDs, thumb drives, a guidebook, and workshops. Faiz believes that the smartphone is the best way to learn Arabic vocabulary and phrases because it saves time for them, and there is no need to attend classes at specific times. He points out that most Malaysian taxi drivers now own smartphones and spend most of their time inside the car. Furthermore, it is easy to move from one place to another (Faiz, QU: 1548-1564). Providing this vocabulary and phrases according to the oral communication scenarios through applications on the smartphone may be more effective and appealing for learning without boredom, fatigue, and time waste.

An application of this proposal, which translates the applications in the smartphone, is the closest relationship. Suhai suggests that a dictionary suits them in learning the needed Arabic vocabulary and phrases for their work and then using them in the mentioned communication scenarios. He explains that they can translate the meanings

of these Arabic words into Malay because many dictionaries now provide vocabulary or phrases and their English equivalents (Suhai, QU: 1568, 1608 & 1779). This dictionary, containing a list of Arabic vocabulary and phrases needed, can be arranged according to specific scenarios.

Rash, on the other hand, suggests the use of CD-ROMs in this learning. He comments that these vocabulary and phrases can be put on the CD-ROM as each taxi has a CD player. Additionally, the cost is cheaper at RM 0.80 per slice, allowing the company to provide it to all drivers, compared to using a thumb drive as proposed by Faiz (Faiz, QU: 1596). The drivers need to play the CD according to its tracks, starting from greetings and introductions, answering the questions and inquiries posed by Arabic passengers, and providing them with helpful information during their visit to Malaysia (Rash, QU: 1580-1584). In other words, this oral communication will occur between them using the tool, i.e., the CD-ROM.

Furthermore, Faiz believes a guidebook would also help them learn these vocabulary and phrases to employ them in the mentioned communication scenarios. He has outlined the necessary characteristics to achieve the goal of using them in oral communication with passengers or Arabic tourists. One of the most important characteristics is that it should be a compact booklet, like the "Yes" booklet, to facilitate carrying and memorizing. The vocabulary and phrases included in it should be short to facilitate the storage in their memory and understanding (Faiz, QU: 1796-1800).

Most study participants consider the workshop to be the last option as a means for this teaching and learning process. This is due to the nature of their work. They argue that the drivers do not attend workshops because their attendance would result in losing their income for that day, knowing that the daily rental fee of the car binds them. This matter will affect the teaching and learning process. It would be as if they were learning unwillingly, without understanding or remembering it, unless the workshop serves as preparation for what they will learn by themselves later. It should also involve exceptions or waving the car rental fee for that appointment to attend the workshop (QU: 1672-1702).

The drivers' strong preference for mobile phones, CDs, guidebooks, and apps as learning tools is supported by contemporary research in Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Systematic reviews demonstrate that mobile-assisted vocabulary learning significantly enhances retention and learner motivation (Nawaz et al., 2025). Case studies also support the effectiveness of mobile-based task learning in boosting vocabulary and attitude (Jedi-Sari-Biglar & Liman-Kaban, 2023) and improving speaking skills via interactive mobile apps (Elverici, 2023; Alexiadou & Sougari, 2025). These findings strongly suggest that integrating MALL into professional Arabic training—using scenario-based dialogues, flashcards, audio prompts, and pronunciation drills—would significantly benefit drivers.

Moreover, studies indicate microlearning content (segments less than 5 minutes) enhances comprehension and retention in ESP contexts (Herlangga & Sukarno, 2024). Such formats align perfectly with drivers' workflow and learning constraints. The limited interest in traditional workshops also highlights the tension between income dependency and formal training attendance as a challenge reported in several studies on workplace training for blue-collar workers (Mohamed & Nordin, 2014). Mobile alternatives allow autonomy, on-demand access, and minimal disruption—key elements in andragogical effectiveness (Knowles, 1984). This implies that any future Arabic language programme for taxi drivers must integrate technology-enhanced tools and asynchronous delivery

formats to ensure accessibility, motivation, and sustainability. Additionally, integrating phrases according to real situations (e.g., asking about destination, price, or hotel) facilitates chunk-based acquisition, proven effective in ESP contexts (Woodward-Kron, 2008).

## CONCLUSION

The language program for specific purposes is primarily based on analyzing the learners' needs, a concept widely agreed upon by applied linguists as the key to designing a reliable language program (Al-Said Badawi, 1980). Thus, this study has adopted this approach, revealing a list of typical language needs in Arabic language oral communication scenarios required by Malaysian taxi drivers. Additionally, these scenarios are real, as they are based on the experiences of these drivers while dealing with Arabic passengers or tourists for at least three years. This approach is called the communicative approach (Kai Kok, 2008), believing that the language program is prepared considering their actual needs, making it more meaningful and positive for them so they do not feel a gap between what they learn and what they need. Based on this approach (needs analysis, including necessities, deficiencies, and desires) and the communicative approach, this study has reached its most important results, which can be presented as follows:

According to Tony Dudley & Maggie John (1998), personal information about learners is one of the crucial foundations of needs analysis in its current concept. The interviews in this study revealed that all participants have long work experience ranging from 3 to 8 years, except for one who has only three months of experience. None of them had previously learned the Arabic language, which makes their proficiency in Arabic weak. This may explain the results of Shakira's study (2009), which stated that this weakness is due to a lack of linguistic wealth, as well as the difference in language and culture. The reason for not learning the Arabic language can be attributed to two main factors: firstly, the nature of their busy work, which involves dealing with passengers throughout the day, making it challenging to find the time for language learning. Secondly, some of them believe that Arab tourists come to Malaysia for a temporary season, with their numbers increasing only during a specific period (June, July, and August), known as the "Arab Period" (Ali Salman & Mohd Safar Hasim, 2012). Therefore, they do not see the need to learn the Arabic language and consider English, sign language, or body language sufficient for communication. However, they acknowledge the failure of oral communication with Arab passengers due to language barriers. Nonetheless, they still view basic oral proficiency in the Arabic language as incredibly important in their work. This aligns with previous studies by scholars such as Hashim Mat Zin and Tengku Ghani Jusoh (2011), Ibrahim Sulaiman and Wan Nuruddin (2011), Zalika Adam and Abd Rahman Chik (2011), and Mohammad Najib Jaffar and Mohammad Imran Ahmad (2013), which emphasize that speaking skills are the most crucial linguistic skills in the field of tourism when dealing with Arab tourists.

The oral communication situations that are necessary for the Arabic language for Malaysian taxi drivers, representing the necessity for learning Arabic for their professional tourism purposes, can be divided into 24 scenarios, as follows:

At the airport, there are six scenarios, which include welcoming passengers, inquiring about their destination, resolving any difficulties in understanding the correct direction,

aiding and services, informing them about ticket prices, and explaining the destinations and tourist attractions in Malaysia.

While driving inside the taxi, there are 15 scenarios categorized into five functions:

1. Responding to the questions frequently asked by Arab passengers/tourists in 6 scenarios, including inquiries about restaurants, weather, forests, crowded places, obtaining a sim card, currency exchange, and prayer times.
2. Asking questions in four scenarios, such as the passenger's destination, the purpose of their visit to Malaysia, whether it is their first visit, and if they have any friends in Malaysia.
3. Introducing and promoting tourist destinations. These destinations are famous historical, archaeological, and tourist sites such as Langkawi, Penang Island, and Genting Highlands.
4. Providing information about famous and large shopping centers in Malaysia, as well as public transportation facilities.
5. Responding to sensitive questions or remarks involving harsh words directed at Malaysian taxi drivers due to their inability to speak Arabic.

After arriving at the destination, there are three scenarios. This includes self-promotion by offering their services and giving out their mobile phone numbers for contact, inquiring about the Arab tourists' need for the services they provide, and asking about how to contact these Arab passengers by phone, especially when they want to return to the airport or for other purposes like sightseeing. These are considered the necessities that learners (taxi drivers) must know to effectively communicate in these targeted situations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1986).

The study found that the linguistic shortcomings among Malaysian taxi drivers are extensive, and the language program must be designed to address and rectify these deficiencies. This conclusion is drawn from a detailed comparison between their present Arabic language speaking abilities and the level of proficiency required for effective communication in their professional environment. The preferred method for these taxi drivers to learn Arabic vocabulary and structures, considering their personal preferences, includes six options for learning and education: mobile or smartphone, dictionary, compact discs, thumb drive, guidebook, and workshops. The smartphone is considered the best tool and method for teaching Arabic vocabulary and structures due to its time-saving features, as there is no need for them to attend specific classes at fixed times. Additionally, most Malaysian taxi drivers now own smartphones and spend a significant amount of time in their cars, making it convenient for learning and easily portable from one place to another. Therefore, Mohammad Najib Jaffar et al. (2022) recommended the utilization of technology and mobile applications in teaching and learning Arabic for specific purposes, such as within the context of tourism.

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