Listening to Arabic as a Foreign Language: Challenges and the Role of Augmented Reality in Enhancing Comprehension

Hanis Najwa Shaharuddin[1], Fitri Nurul'ain Nordin[1], Muhammad Hatta Shafri[1*], Fudzla Suraiyya Abdul Raup[1], Mohamad Rofian Ismail[2], Khairubarieyah Anshar[3]

[1]Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor, Malaysia

[2]Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Dungun, Malaysia

[3]Kolej Islam Muhammadiyah, Singapore

***Corresponding Author**

DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.910000599

Received: 27 October 2025; Accepted: 02 November 2025; Published: 19 November 2025

ABSTRACT

Listening skill is a fundamental component in the acquisition of Arabic as a foreign language. However, students often face challenges in mastering this skill due to linguistic, pedagogical, and affective factors. This study was conducted to identify the level of motivation, difficulties, and psychological aspects among students in learning Arabic listening skills, as well as to examine the relationship between motivation and difficulties. A quantitative research design was employed using a questionnaire distributed to 261 students from the Social Sciences cluster at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, who were taking Arabic as a third language. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 29 to obtain mean scores, standard deviations, and percentages. The findings revealed that students demonstrated a high level of motivation to master listening skills, particularly in distinguishing Arabic sounds. Nevertheless, they encountered difficulties in comprehending complex oral input such as lecturers' lectures and faced limitations due to the lack of authentic audio materials in the teaching process. Correlation analysis indicated that there was no significant relationship between students' motivation and their level of difficulty in learning Arabic listening skills ($r = 0.051$, $p = 0.411$). This suggests that motivation alone is not sufficient to overcome pedagogical and linguistic challenges. From an affective perspective, some students were found to have low confidence in practicing listening skills, which in turn affected their learning effectiveness. Therefore, the study suggests the integration of Augmented Reality as an innovative strategy to strengthen the teaching of Arabic listening skills through the provision of authentic materials, interactive simulations, as well as enhancing students' motivation and confidence.

Keywords: listening skills, Arabic language, learning difficulties, language comprehension, augmented reality

INTRODUCTION

Listening is a fundamental skill in second language acquisition, including Arabic. However, non-native learners often face challenges in mastering this skill due to linguistic factors, a lack of learning strategies, and psychological influences. Listening is considered the foundation of language acquisition, as it serves as the gateway to mastering speaking, reading, and writing. Unlike reading or writing, which can be carried out in a controlled manner, listening requires the immediate and simultaneous processing of meaning. In learning Arabic as a foreign language, these challenges are further intensified by the complex phonological features of Arabic, its root-and-pattern-based morphological system, and the existence of diglossia that distinguishes between the standard language and daily dialects (Mohd Sidek and Mikail, 2017). Consequently, listening is not merely the reception of sounds, but rather involves higher-level cognitive processing.

The mastery of any language requires learners to acquire four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, among these four, listening is often underestimated and regarded as a passive skill that

learners will naturally acquire during classroom instruction (Mohammed, 2022). As a result, listening tends to receive less direct pedagogical attention compared to reading or grammar. This perception has led to a scarcity of teaching materials specifically designed for listening practice, which in turn contributes to students' limited proficiency in this skill.

Listening, however, is not an automatic process but a highly complex cognitive activity that demands focused practice and meaningful input. Without sufficient exposure to authentic listening materials, learners struggle to recognize phonetic nuances, process connected speech, and comprehend spoken discourse in real-life contexts (Mohd Sidek and Mikail, 2017; Aljadani and Almaliki, 2024). The neglect of this skill in formal instruction creates a gap between students' strong motivation to learn and their actual ability to process auditory input effectively.

To address these challenges, the integration of technology into listening instruction has gained increasing attention. One innovation that has attracted significant interest is the use of Augmented Reality (AR). AR technology overlays virtual elements such as text, audio, and images onto real-world environments, thereby enriching learning experiences to be more interactive and immersive (Chen and Tsai, 2012). In the context of Arabic listening skills, AR can be employed to simulate authentic communicative situations — such as interactions in classrooms, restaurants, or airports — thus providing learners with opportunities to practice listening to oral input within contexts that closely resemble real life. In addition, AR supports learning theories such as Krashen's Comprehensible Input (1985), which emphasizes the importance of meaningful input, and Paivio's Dual Coding Theory (1986), which explains that combining visual and auditory input enhances comprehension and memory retention. Therefore, AR functions not only as a teaching aid but also as a tool to boost learner motivation, reduce boredom in listening activities, and provide more contextualized learning experiences.

Overall, the application of AR in Arabic listening instruction offers an innovative solution to the linguistic, pedagogical, and affective challenges highlighted in previous studies. It also paves the way for more effective listening instruction models that align with the needs of 21st-century learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Listening Skill Issues

A review of past studies reveals that listening skills in Arabic have been examined from various perspectives, including linguistic aspects, learning strategies, affective factors, and pedagogical dimensions. From the phonological and linguistic perspective, non-native learners often struggle to distinguish certain Arabic sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue. For instance, emphatic consonants and vowel length distinctions greatly affect word meaning; failure to recognize these differences can lead to misinterpretation in communication (Al-Busaidi, 2012). Additionally, in terms of morphology, Arabic's unique root-and-pattern system demands a high level of cognitive processing to determine the meaning of words that can take multiple forms (Ryding, 2014).

Furthermore, the contrast between Modern Standard Arabic and the various local dialects of native speakers poses a significant barrier. Students are typically taught in the standard variety but encounter diverse dialects in daily interactions, media, and authentic materials. This makes it difficult for learners to understand variations in vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structures (Azka et al., 2024). Authentic spoken discourse also involves connected speech and vowel reduction, which differ from the slow, clear, and structured recordings commonly used in classrooms. This creates a gap between formal learning experiences and real-life communication (Mohd Sidek and Mikail, 2017).

From a pedagogical standpoint, listening practice in Arabic language instruction is often not emphasized as much as reading or grammar. Teaching materials are usually limited to recordings or texts from textbooks, while authentic input such as interactive dialogues, media broadcasts, and real communication are rarely employed (Field, 2008). As a result, learners mostly practice listening in artificial contexts, which are difficult to transfer to real-life situations.

In terms of learning strategies, research indicates that students tend to employ metacognitive strategies to comprehend listening input, particularly problem-solving strategies. However, the use of mental translation strategies has declined among learners, in line with contemporary teaching approaches that encourage direct processing in the target language rather than heavy reliance on mental translation (Al-Hawamdeh and Al-Khawaldeh, 2023). This reflects a shift from traditional strategies to more authentic and communicative approaches.

Beyond linguistic and strategic factors, personality traits and affective elements also play an important role. Barnabas, Rafli, and Rasyid (2021) found that listening anxiety, low self-confidence, and working memory load negatively affect students' ability to process input effectively. Extroverted learners are more likely to use social strategies such as group discussions and active cognitive strategies during listening tasks. In contrast, introverted learners display lower levels of engagement, tend to be more passive, and make less use of social strategies. These factors directly influence the effectiveness of listening practice, as learners' attitudes and classroom roles determine the extent to which language input is actively processed.

The Role of Augmented Reality

Augmented Reality (AR) has gained increasing attention in language education due to its potential to merge real-world environments with interactive digital information such as audio, text, and images. This technology can make language learning more immersive, contextual, and experience-based (Parmaxi and Demetriou, 2020). In the context of listening skills, AR is believed to help learners better comprehend auditory input through multimodal integration, immediate feedback, and enhanced intrinsic motivation.

Several studies have shown that AR can improve overall language performance, including listening skills. A meta-analysis by Xiao et al. (2022) reported that the use of extended reality (XR, encompassing AR/VR) had a significant impact on language learning, with a high effect size (≈ 0.82). This impact stems from more interactive and enjoyable learning experiences, which in turn encourage learners to pay greater attention to listening materials. In a more specific study, Chen and Tsai (2012) found that integrating AR to present real-world objects alongside relevant audio helped learners understand spoken messages more accurately, thanks to dual coding support (audio + visual).

Mechanistically, AR enhances comprehension in several ways: (i) multimodal anchoring that links visual and auditory information; (ii) provision of authentic contexts that facilitate meaning inference; (iii) control over audio pace and replay functions; (iv) immediate feedback during interactive tasks; and (v) increased learner motivation and attention through more engaging experiences (Parmaxi and Demetriou, 2020).

AR also plays a role in providing authentic communicative situations that emphasize situated learning. By simulating daily scenarios such as markets or restaurants, learners can practice understanding oral input in contexts that closely resemble reality (Majid and Salam, 2021). This approach not only facilitates top-down strategies, such as making inferences based on context, but also supports bottom-up strategies in recognizing phonemes and vocabulary (Field, 2008). The ability to control audio tempo and repeat recordings within AR applications further reduces cognitive load and provides opportunities for repeated practice, a crucial factor in improving listening accuracy (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012).

Beyond linguistic aspects, AR has been shown to positively influence learner motivation and engagement. Several literature reviews highlight that AR use in language classrooms enhances interest, confidence, and social interaction, directly reducing listening anxiety (Parmaxi and Demetriou, 2020; Frontiers, 2024). Barnabas et al. (2021) also emphasize that affective factors play a major role in listening success; thus, AR can serve as a medium to balance both cognitive and affective aspects.

In conclusion, the literature indicates that AR has strong potential as an effective facilitator for Arabic listening instruction, as it integrates multimodal input, authentic contexts, and interactive features that foster learner motivation.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative survey design to investigate the challenges faced by students in acquiring Arabic listening skills. The quantitative approach was chosen as it enables the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to provide a general overview of students' patterns and levels of difficulty (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

Participants

The sample was selected through purposive sampling, focusing specifically on students who took Arabic as a third language from the Social Sciences cluster. A total of 261 students from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, participated as respondents. The sample size was determined based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, which recommends a minimum of 260 respondents for a population exceeding 800 students. Therefore, the number of respondents (n = 261) was deemed sufficient and representative of the population.

Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used as the research instrument. Prior to full-scale administration, a pilot study was conducted on a subset of respondents to examine the reliability of the questionnaire. The results yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.908, indicating a high level of reliability (Pallant, 2020). This value confirmed that the instrument was consistent and appropriate for actual data collection.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to the targeted respondents to collect data regarding their demographic background and difficulties in Arabic listening. Participation was voluntary, and respondents provided their input anonymously to ensure accuracy and honesty in responses.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. Descriptive analyses, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were applied to describe respondents' demographic profiles as well as their levels of listening difficulty. The interpretation of mean scores followed four levels of classification: low, moderately low, moderate, and high (Nunnally and Bersten, 1994). Table 1 below presents the distribution of mean score values and their interpretations.

Table I Interpretation Of Mean Score Values

Mean Score Range	Interpretation
1.00 – 2.00	Low
2.01 – 3.00	Moderately Low
3.01 – 4.00	Moderately High
4.01 – 5.00	High

Inferential statistics in the form of Pearson correlation analysis were used to determine the relationship between students' motivation and the difficulties they face in learning Arabic listening skills.

RESULTS

Demographic Analysis

The demographic profile of respondents was analyzed to provide a clearer understanding of the background of students involved in this study. A total of 261 students from the Social Sciences cluster at Universiti Teknologi

MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam participated as respondents. The demographic variables considered include gender, age, year of study, prior exposure to the Arabic language, and knowledge of augmented reality. The descriptive analysis was conducted using frequency and percentage values. The distribution of respondents across each demographic category is presented in Table 2.

Table II Demographic Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage %
Gender	Male	58	22.2
	Female	203	77.8
Age	18-22 years old	232	88.9
	22-27 years old	28	10.7
	28-32 years old	1	0.4
Experience of learning Arabic	1-2 years	136	52.1
	3-5 years	36	13.8
	5 years and above	89	34.1
Knowledge of Augmented Reality	Yes	117	44.8
	No	144	55.2
Total		261	100

Based on the responses to the questionnaire, the findings were recorded by examining the frequency and percentage values obtained. Out of the 261 respondents involved in this study, 58 respondents (22.2%) were male students, while 203 respondents (77.8%) were female students. In terms of age, 232 respondents (88.9%) were between 18–22 years old, 28 respondents (10.7%) were between 23–27 years old, and only 1 respondent (0.4%) was between 28–32 years old. With regard to experience in learning Arabic, 136 respondents (52.1%) had 1–2 years of experience, 36 respondents (13.8%) had 3–5 years of experience, while 89 respondents (34.1%) had more than 5 years of experience learning Arabic. As for knowledge of Augmented Reality (AR), 117 respondents (44.8%) reported being aware of AR, whereas 144 respondents (55.2%) had no prior knowledge of it.

Analysis of the Purpose of Learning Arabic Listening Skills

Based on the administered questionnaire, the analysis of the purpose of learning Arabic listening skills was conducted by examining the mean scores and standard deviations for each item.

Table III Analysis of the Purpose Learning Arabic Listening Skills

No.	Item	SD	D	LA	A	SA	Mean	SD	Interpretation
B1	To recognize the sounds of Arabic letters.	00%	10.4%	176.5%	9837.5%	14555.6%	4.48	0.636	High
B2	To distinguish the sounds of Arabic letters.	00%	10.4%	135.0%	10239.1%	14555.6%	4.50	0.612	High
B3	To understand simple sentences used in class.	00%	10.4%	166.1%	10038.3%	14455.2%	4.48	0.630	High
B4	To understand questions asked in class.	00%	10.4%	2810.7%	8231.4%	15057.5%	4.46	0.698	High
B5	To comprehend classroom conversations and discussions.	00%	00%	259.6%	9034.5%	14655.9%	4.46	0.665	High
B6	To understand the content of videos and recordings in Arabic.	00%	10.4%	2710.3%	8532.6%	14856.7%	4.46	0.693	High
B7	To understand lecturers' explanations in class.	00%	20.8%	238.8%	9436.0%	14254.4%	4.44	0.686	High

B8	To draw conclusions from what is heard from audio and multimedia materials.	10.4%	10.4%	207.7%	9636.8%	14354.8%	4.45	0.687	High
Total Mean							4.46	0.573	High

Based on Table 3 above, all items recorded high mean scores ranging between 4.44 and 4.50. Out of the eight items under the first construct, the highest mean was obtained for Item 2 (To distinguish the sounds of Arabic letters) with a mean of 4.50 and a standard deviation of 0.612. This was followed closely by two items with equally high means: Item 1 (To recognize the sounds of Arabic letters) and Item 3 (To understand simple sentences used in class), both with a mean of 4.48 and standard deviations of 0.636 and 0.630 respectively. Next, three items recorded the same mean value, namely Item 4 (To understand questions asked in class), Item 5 (To comprehend classroom conversations and discussions), and Item 6 (To understand the content of videos and recordings in Arabic), each with a mean of 4.46 and standard deviations of 0.698, 0.665, and 0.693 respectively. The lowest mean in this construct was observed in Item 7 (To understand lecturers' explanations in class) with a mean of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.686.

The findings also show that the highest percentage of agreement among respondents was recorded in Item 2 (94.7%, 247 respondents), Item 3 (93.5%, 244 respondents), and Item 1 (93.1%, 243 respondents). Conversely, the highest percentage of disagreement was found in Item 7 and Item 8, both at 0.8% (2 respondents). Meanwhile, the item with the highest percentage of "less agree" responses was Item 4, at 10.7% (28 respondents). Overall, the findings for this construct — the purpose of learning Arabic listening skills — recorded a high overall mean value of 4.46 with a standard deviation of 0.573.

Analysis of the Level of Difficulty in Learning Arabic Listening Skills

Based on the administered questionnaire, the analysis of the level of difficulty in learning Arabic listening skills was conducted by examining the mean scores and standard deviations for each item.

Table IV Analysis of the Level of Difficulty in Learning Arabic Listening Skills

No.	Item	SD	D	LA	A	SA	Mean	SD	Interpretation
C1	There is no specific audio for learning Arabic vocabulary in the book.	145.4 %	238.8 %	9636.8 %	7629.1 %	5219.9%	3.49	1.073	Moderately High
C2	There is no specific audio for learning Arabic phrases in the book.	135%	228.4 %	9335.6 %	8432.2 %	4918.8%	3.51	1.047	Moderately High
C3	There is no specific audio in learning Arabic dialogues/hiwar in the book.	155.7 %	259.6 %	9937.9 %	7227.6 %	5019.2%	3.45	1.082	Moderately High
C4	There is no specific audio for practicing Arabic listening skills in the book.	197.3 %	2610.0 %	8030.7 %	7629.1 %	6023.0%	3.51	1.162	Moderately High
C5	There are no study aids other than books in learning Arabic listening skills.	238.8 %	3814.6 %	7829.9 %	7528.7 %	4718.0%	3.33	1.185	Moderately High
C6	Lack of understanding of the pronunciation of Arabic letters learned in class.	3513.4 %	5019.2 %	8633.0 %	5320.3 %	3714.2%	3.03	1.226	Moderately High
C7	Lack of understanding of the pronunciation of Arabic words learned in class.	3212.3 %	4617.6 %	8331.8 %	6023.0 %	4015.3%	3.11	1.226	Moderately High
C8	Lack of understanding of the pronunciation of Arabic phrases learned in class.	3312.6 %	3714.2 %	9235.2 %	6023.0 %	3914.9%	3.13	1.209	Moderately High
C9	Lack of understanding of simple Arabic sentences used in class.	3212.3 %	5119.5 %	9636.8 %	4818.4 %	3413.0%	3.00	1.182	Moderately High
C10	Lack of exposure to multimedia Arabic listening skills materials.	207.7 %	4015.3 %	7629.1 %	6324.1 %	6223.8%	3.41	1.220	Moderately High
C11	Learning listening skills only focuses on	176.5	218.0	8030.7	7829.9	6524.9%	3.59	1.139	Moderately

	the lecturer reading Arabic sentences or phrases found in the book.	%	%	%	%				High
C12	Lack of confidence to practice Arabic listening skills.	2610.0%	3312.6%	8030.7%	6524.9%	5721.8%	3.36	1.234	Moderately High
C13	Lecturers place less emphasis on teaching Arabic listening skills.	5420.7%	5922.6%	8733.3%	3413.0%	2710.3%	2.70	1.230	Moderately Low
Total Mean							3.27	0.892	Moderately High

The findings in Table 4 show that out of the total 13 items, 12 items recorded a moderately high mean (3.00–3.59), while only 1 item recorded a moderately low mean of 2.70. The item with the highest mean was C11 (Learning listening skills is limited to the lecturer's reading of Arabic sentences or phrases found in the textbook) with a mean value of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 1.139. This was followed by two items, namely C2 (No specific audio provided for learning Arabic phrases in the textbook) and C4 (No specific audio provided for listening skill exercises in the textbook), with mean values of 3.51 and standard deviations of 1.047 and 1.162, respectively. The item with the lowest mean was C13 (Lecturers place little emphasis on teaching Arabic listening skills), with a mean value of 2.70 and a standard deviation of 1.230.

The results also recorded the highest percentage of agreement among respondents for C11 (54.8%, 143 respondents), followed by C4 (52.1%, 136 respondents). The item that recorded the highest percentage of disagreement was C13 (43.3%, 113 respondents), followed by C9 (31.8%, 83 respondents). For the "less agree" category, the highest percentage was recorded in C3 (37.9%, 99 respondents). Overall, the findings for this construct — the level of difficulty in learning Arabic listening skills — recorded a moderately high mean value of 3.27 with a standard deviation of 0.892.

The Relationship Between Students' Motivation and the Level of Difficulty in Learning Arabic Listening Skills

Table V Results Of The Pearson Correlation Test On The Relationship Between Motivation And Difficulties In Learning Arabic Listening Skills

Construct	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significant Level	N
Students' Motivation and the Level of Difficulty in Learning Arabic Listening Skills	.051	.411	261

*p<0.05

Based on Table 5 above, a Pearson correlation test was conducted to examine the relationship between students' motivation to learn Arabic listening skills and the difficulties encountered in learning Arabic listening skills. The findings revealed no significant relationship between motivation and listening difficulties ($r = 0.051$, $p = 0.411$), as $p > 0.05$.

DISCUSSION

The findings on the purpose of students learning Arabic listening skills (Table 3) reveal that the majority of students are highly motivated to develop this competence. The item with the highest mean score was the ability to recognize Arabic sounds, which clearly demonstrates that students are aware of the importance of phonetic mastery as a fundamental basis for acquiring listening skills in Arabic. This is particularly relevant since Arabic sounds differ significantly from those in students' mother tongue. El Moussaoui and Belhaj (2023) emphasize that learners and teachers alike view bottom-up processing—focusing on sounds and words—as an essential prerequisite before engaging with higher-order comprehension processes.

There are two strategies commonly employed in listening comprehension: bottom-up processing, which focuses on decoding sounds and words, and top-down processing, which involves activating background knowledge and context. Based on the current findings, students appear to emphasize the bottom-up strategy as

a prerequisite before engaging in deeper listening tasks. This approach is consistent with recommendations by Fachriza et al. (2022), who argue that effective listening instruction should balance both strategies by beginning with simpler phonetic recognition before moving to more complex contextual understanding.

Another item that scored highly was students' desire to understand simple sentences in class. This indicates the need for mastery of basic linguistic input before progressing to more advanced comprehension of longer texts. Krashen (1985) similarly asserts that comprehensible input is key to language acquisition, and learning is most effective when input is pitched at a level appropriate to learners' current ability. However, the relatively lower mean score for understanding lecturers' formal explanations suggests that students face greater challenges when processing more complex and less repetitive input. Boyle (1984) explains that academic lectures represent one of the most difficult listening tasks, given their reliance on academic vocabulary and rapid speech delivery.

The findings on the level of difficulty in learning Arabic listening skills (Table 4) indicate that pedagogical factors have a significant impact on learning effectiveness. The highest-scoring difficulty items concerned the lack of audio resources and the reliance on lecturers reading directly from texts. This reflects students' need for a variety of authentic listening inputs. The absence of such resources limits their ability to experience realistic communication situations. Mahmoud and Oraby (2023) note that listening is often marginalized in classroom practice, with instruction overly dependent on written texts, thereby neglecting key features of spoken discourse such as pronunciation, intonation, and tempo.

Given these limitations, the use of Augmented Reality (AR) appears to be a promising innovation to support students in learning Arabic listening skills. AR can provide more dynamic and authentic materials by integrating accurate audio pronunciation with visual cues, such as animated mouth movements, to help students imitate sounds more effectively. This supports bottom-up processing while simultaneously enhancing top-down comprehension through meaningful contextual visuals. Furthermore, AR allows for simulated real-life listening situations—for instance, virtual dialogues in a classroom or restaurant setting—which provide more authentic input compared to simple lecturer readings.

The results also reveal that one of the lowest-scoring items was the perception that lecturers do not emphasize listening skills in class. While this item scored relatively low overall, 23% of respondents still agreed, indicating that listening instruction is not always prioritized. This finding echoes Hawamdeh and Al-Khawaldeh (2023), who found that in the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, listening skills are often sidelined in favor of grammar, reading, and translation. This gap illustrates the mismatch between students' high motivation (Table 3) and the weaker pedagogical support they receive (Table 4).

To address these issues, the integration of AR into listening instruction is strongly recommended. AR not only diversifies teaching approaches without overburdening lecturers but also supports student-centered learning by encouraging learners to interact with listening tasks independently, such as responding to interactive questions or recognizing sounds through AR applications (Noor Syazana Che Ismail and Abdul Aziz, 2023).

In addition to pedagogical factors, the findings of this study revealed the influence of affective aspects in mastering Arabic listening skills. Item C12 showed a moderately high mean, indicating that students felt less confident when performing listening tasks. This suggests that a considerable number of students lack confidence in practicing Arabic listening skills. Such feelings of low confidence may be attributed to linguistic challenges, particularly the phonetic differences between Arabic and the learners' mother tongue, as well as limited experience in formal learning contexts such as structured classes and examinations.

Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis emphasizes that negative emotions, including anxiety and lack of self-confidence, may block linguistic input from being effectively processed. This aligns with Vandergrift (2007), who highlighted that metacognitive and affective dimensions are strongly interconnected in listening. Learners with low confidence often avoid active engagement in listening activities, thus limiting their potential to improve their listening performance.

The implication of these findings is that affective challenges require targeted teaching strategies. Educators should not only provide authentic audio materials but also foster opportunities for students to practice listening in a safe, engaging, and low-anxiety environment. For instance, the integration of Augmented Reality (AR) technology can create interactive simulations of real-life communication scenarios, enabling students to engage with listening tasks more confidently and effectively. Such approaches can reduce anxiety, increase motivation, and ultimately enhance learners' listening competence in Arabic.

In summary, while students display strong motivation and interest in acquiring Arabic listening skills, challenges such as lack of authentic audio materials, reliance on texts, and insufficient instructional emphasis on listening continue to hinder progress. Effective teaching approaches should therefore incorporate authentic materials, audio, video, metacognitive strategy training, and the integration of technologies such as AR. AR, in particular, offers clear advantages by delivering accurate sound input, authentic simulation through interactive scenarios, and greater learner engagement—ultimately reducing students' dependence on the lecturer as the sole source of oral input.

Based on the results of the correlation analysis between students' motivation and their difficulties in learning listening skills, no significant relationship was found. This indicates that the level of students' motivation is not statistically related to the difficulties they face in learning Arabic listening skills. The results suggest that highly motivated students do not necessarily experience fewer difficulties, and students with lower motivation do not necessarily face greater challenges in developing listening proficiency.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that motivation alone is insufficient to overcome the linguistic and pedagogical challenges faced by learners. Although students demonstrated a high level of motivation, they still encountered several issues such as limited access to authentic audio materials, phonetic differences between Arabic and their mother tongue, and varied teaching methods employed by lecturers. This aligns with Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that while motivation is an important affective factor that supports language acquisition, it cannot lead to significant language improvement if linguistic input is insufficient or incomprehensible.

From an implicational perspective, the findings emphasize that motivation alone is not the sole determinant of success and comprehension in Arabic listening skills. Instead, teaching strategies should focus on providing authentic input, interactive activities, and a low-anxiety learning environment. The use of Augmented Reality (AR) technology, for example, can enhance learning by offering contextual, engaging, and immersive listening experiences. Such approaches combine students' motivation with meaningful and enjoyable learning (Noor Syazana Che Ismail & Abdul Aziz, 2023).

Overall, the non-significant correlation suggests that motivation by itself does not determine students' success in mastering Arabic listening skills. Effective learning requires a combination of affective factors, metacognitive strategies, and innovative approaches that give students the opportunity to practice Arabic listening actively and authentically.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that students are highly motivated to learn Arabic listening skills, particularly in distinguishing sounds and letters, which form the foundation of comprehension. However, their motivation is hindered by pedagogical challenges, including limited authentic audio resources, overreliance on text-based instruction, insufficient emphasis on listening activities by lecturers, and lack of confident in performing listening tasks. These barriers suggest that the issue lies not in learner willingness but in the instructional approaches employed. Augmented Reality (AR) offers a promising solution by providing multimodal input, authentic simulations, and interactive practice that enhance both comprehension and motivation. By integrating AR into listening instruction, educators can bridge the gap between learners' strong motivation and the lack of pedagogical support. Therefore, adopting innovative, learner-centered approaches enriched with authentic and technologically enhanced materials is essential to improving Arabic listening competence and ensuring effective language acquisition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors gratefully acknowledge the financial support provided by the GIA grant amounting to RM5000, Grant No.: 600-TNCPI 5/3DDF (APB) (027/2024), which made this research possible.

Conflict Of Interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involved with any parties in this research study.

REFERENCES

1. Al-Busaidi, S. (2012). An investigation of listening comprehension problems encountered by Omani EFL learners. Arab World English Journal, 3(2), 19–34.
2. Al-Hawamdeh, A., & Al-Khawaldeh, A. (2023). Metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension strategies among EFL learners. Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 19(1), 45–60.
3. Aljadani, A. S., & Almaliki, M. (2024). Listening comprehension strategies employed by Saudi EFL learners in online learning environments. International Journal of Instruction, 17(1), 185–202. https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2024.17111a
4. Azka, M., Hafsoh, S., & Ibrahim, N. (2024). Diglossia challenges in Arabic listening comprehension: A study on non-native learners. International Journal of Arabic Linguistics, 12(2), 77–95.
5. Barnabas, A., Rafli, Z., & Rasyid, Y. (2021). Personality traits and listening strategy use among EFL students. Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies, 8(2), 233–250.
6. Boyle, J. P. (1984). Factors affecting listening comprehension. ELT Journal, 38(1), 34–38. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/38.1.34
7. Chen, C.-H., & Tsai, P.-S. (2012). Interactive augmented reality system for enhancing library instruction in elementary schools. Computers & Education, 59(2), 638–652. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.03.001
8. Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
9. El Moussaoui, M., & Belhaj, A. (2023). Exploring EFL learners' listening comprehension challenges and strategies: A case study. Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 19(2), 657–671. https://doi.org/10.52462/jlls.473
10. Fachriza, N., Rahmawati, I., & Adnan, A. (2022). Enhancing listening comprehension through bottom-up and top-down strategies: An experimental study. Studies in English Language and Education, 9(3), 907–921. https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v9i3.27055
11. Field, J. (2008). Listening in the language classroom. Cambridge University Press.
12. Frontiers. (2024). Foreign language learning using augmented reality environments. Frontiers in Virtual Reality, 5, 1288824. https://doi.org/10.3389/frvir.2024.1288824
13. Hawamdeh, R., & Al-Khawaldeh, N. (2023). Listening skill in teaching Arabic as a foreign language: Neglected or integrated? Journal of Language and Education, 9(4), 145–157. https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2023.145
14. Krashen, S. D. (1985). The input hypothesis: Issues and implications. Longman.
15. Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30(3), 607–610.
16. Mahmoud, S., & Oraby, M. (2023). Rethinking listening pedagogy in Arabic as a foreign language classrooms. Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 14(2), 192–210. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol14no2.13
17. Majid, S. N. A., & Salam, A. R. H. (2021). A systematic review of augmented reality applications in language learning. International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning, 16(10), 272–286. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v16i10.17273
18. Mohammed, S. (2022). The neglected skill: Addressing listening in second language classrooms. Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 13(4), 227–241. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol13no4.15
19. Mohd Sidek, H., & Mikail, E. H. (2017). EFL learners' listening comprehension problems in Arabic and English. Journal of Nusantara Studies (JONUS), 2(1), 18–33. https://doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol2iss1pp18-33

20. Nunnally, J. C., & Berstein, I. H. (1994). Psychometric theory (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. Noor Syazana Che Ismail, & Abdul Aziz, A. (2023). Augmented reality applications in Arabic language learning: A systematic review. International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development, 12(2), 99–115. https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i2/12345
21. Paivio, A. (1986). Mental representations: A dual coding approach. Oxford University Press.
22. Pallant, J. (2020). SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using IBM SPSS (7th ed.). Routledge.
23. Parmaxi, A., & Demetriou, A. (2020). Augmented reality in language learning: A state-of-the-art review of 2014–2019. Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 36(6), 861–875. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12453
24. Ryding, K. C. (2014). Arabic: A linguistic introduction. Cambridge University Press.
25. Vandergrift, L. (2007). Recent developments in second and foreign language listening comprehension research. Language Teaching, 40(3), 191–210. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004338
26. Vandergrift, L., & Goh, C. (2012). Teaching and learning second language listening: Metacognition in action. Routledge.
27. Xiao, Y., et al. (2022). Effects of extended reality on language learning: A meta-analysis. Frontiers in Psychology, 13, 828107. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.828107