

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section contributed to the summary of the challenges that medical interpreters confront when interpreting face-to-face. Following that is a summary of the current issues and needs of Arabic interpreters in promoting medical tourism in Malaysia. A summary of the recommendations for improving the competency of Arabic interpreters in Malaysia and general recommendations for this study are provided at the end of this chapter.

#### **5.2 The Challenges Faced by Medical Interpreters in Face-To-Face Interpretation**

This research question has been addressed through the lens of the conceptual framework, specifically focusing on the Arabic interpreters' lacks. For Arabic interpreter's lacks, there are four themes included in the components as follow:

##### **a) Interdisciplinary knowledges (Process Understanding)**

It consists of four subthemes which are accuracy and fluency, dialect, medical terminology and knowledge, and interpretation proficiency.

b) Engagement with medical teams (Interpersonal Sensitivity)

It consists of four subthemes which are communication complexities, negative attitude towards interpreters, lack of understanding on the interpreter's role and work overload.

c) Two-Way communication skills (Communication Skills)

It consists of four subthemes which are analytical skills, cross-cultural understanding, clinical empathy, and non-verbal cues.

d) Interaction with patients (Ethical Responsibility)

It consists of three subthemes which are difficulty understanding the interpreter, trust issues, and patients' bad attitude.

In summary, medical interpreters face various challenges due to their diverse role, such as overcoming language barriers, interpreting medical terms, and handling different dialects. Struggling to ensure accurate and smooth translations increases the risk of spreading incorrect information, especially when dealing with complex medical terms and limited language skills. While collaborating with medical teams is important, misunderstandings in complex conversations can lead to frustration. This is worsened by interpreters being undervalued and sometimes burdened with unrelated tasks due to misunderstandings of their core role. Non-native Arabic interpreters face additional difficulties due to time constraints and potential gaps in information. Good communication skills are essential, alongside the ability to analyze complex situations. Cultural differences can also cause stress, highlighting the need for cross-cultural

awareness. Being skilled at reading nonverbal cues enhances relationships with patients and medical teams, improving overall communication.

### **5.3 The Current Issues and Needs of Arabic Interpreters in Promoting Medical Tourism in Malaysia**

This research inquiry has been explored within the conceptual framework, with a specific emphasis on the Arabic interpreters' necessities. For Arabic interpreter's necessities, there are five themes included in the components as follow:

a) Hard skills and other requirements (Process Understanding)

It consists of nine subthemes which are standard Arabic language, colloquial Arabic language, dialect, mastering four skills, mastery of Arabic communication skills, body language, medical terms in Arabic, graduating in Arabic language and medical interpreter certificate.

b) Understanding daily routine (Interpersonal Sensitivity)

It consists of seven subthemes which are language barrier mediator, assist patients, book appointments, recheck patient history, prepare documentation, distance interpreting, and alert with emergency cases.

c) Good rapport with patients (Interpersonal Sensitivity)

It consists of four subthemes which are patients' trust, patients' satisfaction, gain new knowledge from patients, and relation with patients.

d) Soft skills and other related skills (Communication Skills)

It consists of six subthemes which are being helpful, being friendly, good communication skills, understand Arab culture, maintain a good relationship with medical staff and customer service.

e) Promotion for Other Parties (Ethical Responsibility)

It consists of five subthemes which are encouraging tourism, increasing economy, affordable cost, online advertising, and word-of-mouth promotion.

In conclusion, the role of an Arabic interpreter in healthcare settings is undeniably complex, demanding a high level of proficiency across various skills. Mastery of both standard and colloquial Arabic, often coupled with a graduate degree in Arabic, is essential to effectively navigate communication nuances, body language, and dialects, crucial for cultivating positive patient relationships. The absence of recognized medical interpretation certificates in Malaysia further underscores the challenges in verifying interpreters' qualifications. However, these challenges are met with a resolute dedication to serve as indispensable mediators, dismantling language barriers for international patients and offering unwavering support throughout their medical journey. This study illuminates the integral role Arabic interpreters play in ensuring superior medical care for Arab patients, showcasing their meticulous attention to detail, administrative prowess, and adaptability even in remote scenarios.

#### 5.4 The Recommendations for The Improvement of Arabic Interpreters in Malaysia

This research question has been examined within the conceptual framework, with particular attention to the Arabic interpreters' wants. For Arabic interpreter's wants, there are five themes included in the components as follow:

a) Mastering hard skill (Process Understanding)

It consists of five subthemes which are language skills, comprehension, simple sentence structure, mastering dialect and medical terms.

b) Arabic interpreter for other sectors (Interpersonal Sensitivity)

It consists of four subthemes which are information technology, airport, food facilities and tourism.

c) Interpreter career improvement (Interpersonal Sensitivity)

It consists of five subthemes which are permanent position, basic medical course, interpreter training, cooperation with the Arab embassies, and Arabic interpreter conferences.

d) Mastering soft skill (Communication Skills)

It consists of four subthemes which are nonverbal communication, time management, negotiation skills, and avoiding potential conflicts.

- e) Language and communication services for Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (Ethical Responsibility)

It consists of four subthemes which are gain patient confidence, boost economy, MHTC as a third party and improve services.

To conclude, the multifaceted role of Arabic interpreters encompasses the need for a diverse skill set to enhance their proficiency. Profound language competence, encompassing reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills, is foundational, with a particular emphasis on clear communication and understanding of interpreted content. This expertise extends beyond healthcare, reaching sectors such as IT, tourism, airports, and food services, reflecting their pivotal role in bridging language gaps amid advancing global technology. Collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Health, private sector, and participation in specialized conferences are pivotal in elevating interpreters' skills. These enhancements in conjunction with the development of soft skills, such as negotiation, non-verbal communication, and time management, enhance the quality of patient care. Ultimately, the imperative of language services, as embodied by the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), plays a pivotal role in facilitating international patients' access to quality healthcare, thereby contributing to the growth of medical tourism and the nation's economy. Therefore, the necessity for these three elements of interpreter needs is imperative in cultivating a proficient Arabic interpreter to enhance the advancement of medical tourism in Malaysia.

## 5.5 Recommendations for Future Study

Recent research on the needs of Arabic interpreters in promoting medical tourism among visitors from Arab-speaking countries shows a basic understanding of how Arabic interpreters struggle to provide excellent service in promoting medical tourism and the efforts to overcome the challenges to meet the needs of Arabic interpreters so they can provide the best quality of care to patients. Based on this research, Arabic interpreters in Malaysia continue to lack support from any parties, including the government, hospitals, and any relevant organisation that can help them improve their interpreting skills. As a result, most of them train themselves based on their work experiences in hospitals and put in the effort to acquire new knowledge, especially regarding unfamiliar medical terminology. Interpreters may also enrol in private language courses to strengthen their language skills so that they can communicate effectively with international patients.

In addition, efforts can be made by the government to provide formal interpreters in the healthcare system of Malaysia, with the goal of offering interpreters a stable and long-term vocation. Besides, translation agencies like the *Institut Terjemahan dan Buku Malaysia* (ITBM), *Persatuan Penterjemah Malaysia* (PPM) and *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (DBP) may offer short courses on interpreting skills to medical interpreters as a means of continuing education in the profession. Moreover, Malaysia Healthcare Tourism Corporation (MHTC) is able to offer specialised training for medical interpreters to help them improve their skills and give patients the highest possible standard of care. Also, relevant parties may give three main needs for interpreters: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. Cognitive knowledge can be offered by providing medical references and terminology available in various languages.

Psychomotor can be achieved through communication training and exposure to Arab culture. In addition, workshops and consulting sessions for medical interpreters might provide effective or motivational support.

As the role of interpreters has an economic impact and improves the efficacy of patients' medical treatment, suitable training can be provided to improve their services. In-service and pre-service courses are required since most Arabic interpreters do not expose to medical-related knowledge before beginning their careers. During the in-service training, interpreters can learn more about the jargon that was used, the history of the patient, and how to deal with culturally sensitive and complex situations that arose in the process of interpreting (Hagan, 2015).

It is recommended that future academics conduct a study on the creation of a specialised accreditation scheme tailored specifically for medical interpreters to offer qualified interpreters. In addition, the same research conducted on other private hospitals outside of the Klang Valley may be taken into consideration to obtain a greater variety of perspectives and experiences. Moreover, research can be done to compare the challenges posed by Arabic interpreters in Malaysia and other countries to determine the parallels and variations between the two sets of circumstances.