



**INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CONTENT
OF CURRICULUM OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN BORNEO:
A CASE STUDY OF MUHAMMADIYAH NURSING COLLEGE
(STIKES), SAMARINDA, EAST KALIMANTAN, INDONESIA**

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Abstract:

The purpose of this research is to identify the suitability of Arabic curriculum content in Borneo by taking a case study in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. This research applies communicative approach as the measurement. The reason of choosing Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia as the case study is because the researchers think that Arabic is an interesting and a new subject to be taught in this college. The method of the research is a qualitative evaluative method. This method is chosen because it is appropriate with the type of the research that tries to evaluate the Arabic curriculum content in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The method gets the researchers to collect data by interviewing a lecturer who teach Arabic in the college, and he is the only one lecturer who teaches Arabic in the college. The data is also collected by reviewing the textbook for lecturing, entitled "Silsilah Al-Arabiyah Baina Yadaik". The researchers find out many advantages and disadvantages of the arabic content curriculum as the result of the research. The advantages are: 1) the curriculum content of Arabic that is taught in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia (STIKES) is covered four language skills, namely: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. 2) As the curriculum content also starts from the easy to the hard one, 3) while from the cultural view, the content is considered to be in accordance with Islamic teachings and morals. Meanwhile the disadvantages of the curriculum are: 1) mostly, the curriculum content is only focused on reading skill, and less in other skills such as: listening, writing, and speaking. Whereas, a good language curriculum content should cover the four skills in balance, 2) mostly, the book content refers to the culture and the customs of Arabian, whereas it will be more memorable in teaching language if the content also contains local culture and customs that enclose to students' life.

Keywords: content, curriculum, language, Arabic, Borneo

1. Introduction

According to Wekke (2015), in Islamic civilization literature, there are accounts on Arabic being in line with various imperial or development of civilization, whereby Islam cannot be separated from literature and Arab culture growth. This includes linguistics, poetry and history. In the early stages, observations were made by urban society of the Arab world on the Arabic language, encouraged by an urge to learn the Qur'an as absolute. Understanding the Qur'an depend on skills of understanding Arabic, as part of the culture related to Arabic. In addition, Arab literature is up dated to reflect, explain and to be parallel with the Qur'an. The main key to appreciate the Quran itself is through understanding the language. Language to a philologist is one of the most important elements of a civilization, and they limit a civilization to a single language, or from a group of related single languages through acculturation.

Abdur Rahman Al-Hajj Salih (2007) also asserted that the issue of content teaching selection itself is a basic component in the language teaching and learning process, since it is necessary that the content should be based on scientific and functional foundations. He alerted that consideration should be given to the language content which is being presented to the learner; there upon there is a question on what is compulsory to know from the elements and linguistic mechanisms at a specific teaching level which pursues the following aspects:

1. Not everything in language like vocabularies, structural formations and indicative intents are suitable for baby or teenager in a specific conditional stage of his developing stages.
2. Learner is not in need of every linguistic standing rules for expression of his intentions, rather words which indicate common conceptions and scientific technical or civilizational meanings which are contemporarily required are sufficient for him.
3. It is impossible for learner to exceed maximum of the vocabularies and structural sentences during the period of his language learning at a specific level. Even it is necessary for him to be satisfied with a specific quantity in all lessons he learns. If not, he will suffer from memorial indigestion, even serious mental confinement which may deny him to further his language studies.

2. Literature Review

The Content of the Language Textbook in The Light of Communicative Approach

According to Abu Laban (2011), the content of the language textbook in the light of communicative approach is divided into two divisions:

1. Cultural Content; it contains cultural subject matters from which the offering of language content is accomplishable.

2. Linguistic Content; which contains Arabic Language Arts skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing).

There are many criteria for the selection of the lively and communicative situations such as the followings:

- Realism: It implies possibility of its occurrence in the life of learner.
- Value: It indicates concordance and conformity of the situations, devices and activities with moral and religious domain for the society.
- Honesty and suitability: It means suitability of the situation or activity with its occasion and expression for what it represents.
- Efficacy: It means the extent of the expressions and effects of the situation in the future, the consequence of that stance is the availability reality and value.

Therefore, the availability of these standards is an imperative matter, for the purpose of explicitness to the researchers and designers of books and textbooks of Arabic language. The linguistic communicative approach emphasizes on the fact that language teaching is perfectible within its application in the real functions. Meanwhile, mankind exploits language; so as to present himself or demand something or apologize for something, or accept or reject or exhibit his opinion on a specific issue.

Haafiz Ismail Alawi (2009) recounted a dialogue held with Daud Abduh where he defined the functional approach in Arabic Language Teaching in his statement that functional approach in Arabic Teaching is the Arabic teaching through the method that can lead to the mastery of the four language skills: Language comprehension audibly and visually, verbal and written expressions. Therefore, the function of language; whatever language it may be, is the ability on comprehensive understanding and instructiveness. And for the proficiency of these four skills, it is compulsory to give consideration to language grammatical principles (Morphological principles, syntactical principles and writing principles) as the means for the mastery of the previous four skills, no limits to it intrinsically.

It also requires the presence of an integration among linguistic specializations, psychology, sociology and pedagogy because the process of the teaching content selection is influenced by many factors which are partially connected with material things, and partially with the learner, in addition to the external factors which are envisaged in the teaching objectives, level of the curriculum and the fixed time. As these yardsticks and conditions were unavailable in our courses, students started linking the problems of Arabic Language Teaching with the failure of those in charge of the teaching syllabus in the selection of the appropriate linguistic content, especially on the issue of the selection of grammatical content which is considered as the main cause of students estrangement and renunciation from it (Abduh Ar-Raajih, 1995).

Ali Ahmad Madkur (2001) stated that the selection of grammatical subject courses for various classes in our schools can never be perfected on thematic basis, rather topics may be mostly selected based on the personal experience and subjective survey of the members of the curriculum creating committees.

Antwan Sayyaah (2014) added-when he was discussing the causes of the weakness of the Arabic Language Learners in syntax- saying that the weakness stemmed from the mixture of the meagreness of the grammatical subjects with its corpulence and the applied with the unreal forsaken subjects. Nowadays, we still have many textbooks full of inapplicable issues and subjects which cannot increase in the expressive competence of the student like those topics discussing the uses of: *Karuba, Haraa, Ikhlawlaqa* (from among the associates of *Kaada*), as well as persistency in the elaboration on the reasons for the indeclinable grammatical form (*Al-Mamnu'u minas Sarf*). Likewise, those books are full of overproduction of the grammatical conditions and rules in respect of the *indeclinable grammatical form* in spite of its being a specific language or dialect, with the permissible removal of the preventability in the indeclinable grammar while it is impermissible to prevent the changeable form of it.

Mahmoud Ahmad As-Sayyid (1989) also viewed that the teaching of all of these issues without selection for content, or with the random selection of its subject courses, overburdens the student who can attain from his acquisitive intellectual ability for the Arabic Language principles which may lead to the reluctance of the students from such study and thereby increase in the aggravation of the phenomenon of linguistic weakness in the stage of general and university teaching.

Jaahiz (2000) also called for the satisfaction with the grammatical principles of language which can safeguard accurate communication and protect the tongues of speakers from grammatical mistake and error. On that, Jaahiz was saying in the chapter of „Baby Exercise“: *“As for the grammar, do not engage his heart with it, except in accordance with what can trigger him into safety from unreasonable mistake, and from the scope of the ignorance of the general public while writing a write up, composing a poem and describing anything else. Whatever is added on that, he is supposedly busy with better task and dumbfounded about the worst”*.

Nihaad Al-Musa (2015) brought an idea on the grammatical level, that we are in need of a device to distinguish the theoretical principles which can describe the phenomenon in the language course only, and abolish the theories of „causes“, „interpretations“ and „variations“, then come up with such principles on the grammatical fundamentals on which the grammarians unanimously agreed upon. Even the grammatical theories should be restricted from common principles among the grammarians, to those principles which have major roles in use and connected life in application. If we do this, we shall discover that grammar has been reduced into tenths to us, while every reader of this grammar will positively feel that he is truly reading something that has functional reflection near to what he is reading, hearing and what he is required to express.

Surely, the adoption of the functional way in Arabic Language Teaching necessitates the fact-findings of social situations to which mankind are subjected and in which he needs the use of language, its limitation, specification of the common use, classification of the terms, adaptation of its application in the class by the students and adjustment of the curriculum vocabularies so as to conform with the requirements of

the situation. We are not obliged to teach everything to student in a way that he will not comprehend anything at the end; because the mastery of knowledge cannot be evaluated through the memorization of its rules, rather it is measurable through the ability on its usage and application.

However, it is necessary to point out that the functionality is not connected with issues of syntax, morphology, dictation and rhetoric only, but rather the issue is also connected with the selection of the subject matters which student needs at every stage and which can expressively illustrate his interests and various demands, in addition to the evaluation matter and linguistic exercises. Thus, the adherence to the functional approach in the Arabic Language Teaching in our educational curriculums is an obligatory and important matter, but the most important is that such adherence must emanate from a conscious plan to the descriptive dimensions of the language, wherein the linguistic chapters which are majorly in use and circulation would be awarded a high position in the pedagogical programs. We must also concentrate on evaluative styles which can reap the student with ability on exploitation and application of language in various situations; we should eventually achieve a fruitful means for the language, not a preservative device only.

Henceforth, Arabic Language Learning and Teaching in line with the functional approach vividly makes the learning environment more smoothly harmonious with reality, as it often motivates the student and prompts him to learning. It eventually makes him more interested in the language for knowing its value and services which it offers to him in his life, because it is the ideal track which can enable him to face various situations in which the student might be in need of the particular language (Haniyyah Areef and Labukh Bujmaleen, 2015).

3. Methodology

The method of the research is a qualitative evaluative method. Qualitative research has its roots in the field of social sciences. The methods were initially developed by anthropologist as means to understand the lives and culture people from very different backgrounds. These methods were eventually developed by sociologist as a way to understand their own culture and society (William, 2009). Thus, the qualitative research method the views are based on the view human affairs cannot be understood by relying merely on quantitative survey and statistics. Instead, it is necessary to delve into the subjective qualities that make up human behaviour (Creswell, 2013; Holliday, 1994). That is why the focus of qualitative research is on understanding the meaning that events have on the people who are being studied (Patton, 2014). Fetterman (1991:1) expands on this point by asserting that qualitative researchers are interested in "*what people think and why they think what they think*". The author goes on to state that individuals act according they think what they think. The author goes on to state that individuals act according to their on perceptions of reality, which has its own validity and consequences. A qualitative researcher is able to understand, and even observe

these, which in time help the researcher to understand the values and motivations behind a certain thought or behaviour. This is the basic concept that upholds every strategy in the qualitative research paradigm.

This method is chosen because it is appropriate with the type of the research that try to evaluate the Arabic curriculum content in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The reason of choosing Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia as the case study is because the researchers think that Arabic is an interesting and a new subject to be taught in this college. The method gets the researchers to collect data by interviewing a lecturer who teach Arabic, and he is the only one lecturer which teach Arabic in the college. The sample size in qualitative research does need to be very high number as it is required in quantitative study (Creswell, 2013). Meanwhile, it is one of the features of qualitative research to have few sample size or participants (Creswell, 2013). The method of data collection employed in this study was qualitative semi-structured interview approach, because the aim of the interviews was to obtain what Bodgan and Biklen (1992) termed "*comparable data across subjects*". The purpose of qualitative interview, according to Patton (2014) is to "*find out what is in and on someone else's mind*". This is because as researchers, we cannot observe a person's experience, thoughts, or feelings; neither can we observe behaviors that are not apparent in our presence. Above all, we certainly cannot observe people's perceptions of their environment and meanings that they have attached to events that take place in their environment. The researcher is the instrument in qualitative interviews; unique researcher characteristics have the potential to influence the collection of empirical materials. Piantanida & Garman (1999) present a theory to expand the notion of qualitative inquiry to present it as a method and a logic of justification for the research study.

4. Research Finding

Arabic Curriculum Content in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia

A. Suitability of Content in Teaching Arabic with Curriculum Objectives

This research shows that the teaching content of Arabic language in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia is in accordance with the objective of the curriculum, namely introducing Arabic to the students and preparing them with the ability to communicate in Arabic. This is in accordance with the result of the interview:

"The book used to teach Arabic in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia is entitled "Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik" . The content of the book is suitable to be taught to the students in this school. As we know

that the objective of Arabic teaching in the college is to introduce Arabic and to prepare the students with the ability to communicate in Arabic, so that later they can get work opportunities not only in Indonesia but also in Arab countries. The content of the book is suitable for the students who are actually beginners. From this book, they learn to know Arabic, and also gradually practice their Arabic skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing."

The teaching of Arabic in Borneo, especially in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia has reached much progression. Long time ago, the objective of Arabic teaching is only to help muslims in learning religious sciences, considering the original sources of Islam, namely Al Qur'an and Al Hadith, both are written in Arabic. But at this time, Arabic teaching has much progressed, and the aim of studying it is not only for the sake of religion, but more than that, Arabic is also studied for communication purposes. The students who are already learning Arabic are expected to be able to communicate in Arabic. From the results of the interview above it can be understood that the Arabic teaching content taught in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia is in accordance with the objectives of the curriculum outlined, and this is a positive finding from this study.

B. Suitability of Arabic Curriculum Content with Student Ability Stages

As mentioned earlier, the book taught in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia is "*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" book. The findings of this study show that most of the contents of the book are in accordance with the students' attitudes. It is just that there are some parts that are too difficult for them. This finding is based on the following interview:

*"Most of the contents of "*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" is good, and in accordance with the level of ability of the students, it's just that there is a little part of the book that is difficult for them"*

In teaching Arabic, the material or content should be appropriate to the level of students' abilities. A good textbook is a book which its content matches to their level of ability. The results of this study found that most of the contents of "*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" book are in accordance with the level of students' abilities, although there is a small amount of the material is too difficult to understand by the students. The positive findings from this study indicate that the choice chosen by the college in making "*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" as a textbook is right. It is better if the difficult parts of the book which are considered not in accordance with the students level of ability should not be taught. Teaching everything in the book without sorting and choosing between the appropriate and the inappropriate is not quite efficient. Lecturer should be able to choose which parts of the book are worthy of being taught,

and which are not feasible to teach. For some parts that are not feasible to be taught, may be replaced by another textbooks.

C. Arabic Curriculum Content Contains Four Language Skills

Teaching Arabic in the modern era is different from teaching Arabic in the old era. In the old era, Arabic teaching was conducted to understand the religious sciences. Whereas in the modern era, Arabic teaching is held to prepare the students with four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. "*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" book which is taught in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia has contained all aspects of four language proficiencies, and this is a positive finding from this study. While the negative findings are that the book contains too much lessons and exercises for reading skills than listening, speaking, and writing skills. This finding is based on the following interview:

"Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik" book is a pretty good book. There are lessons and exercises that contain four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. The weakness lies in the portion of the lesson and practice of reading skill is a bit too much than other skills."

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that "*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" book is suitable to be taught in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, but the lecturer should rearrange the contents of the book, so that those can be balanced in terms of lessons and exercises of the language proficiency. If all the material of the book is taught, there will be a domination of lessons and exercises for reading skills that dominate the other material skills.

5. Conclusion

"*Silsilah Al Arabiyah Baina Yadaik*" book as the textbook to teach Arabic in Muhammadiyah Nursing College (STIKES) Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia is in accordance with the objectives of the curriculum outlined. The book content is mostly in accordance with the level of ability of the students, although there are some parts that are considered too difficult, so those sections do not need to be taught. As for the four aspects of language skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing, this book has covered all those skills. In the other hand, this book contains a little bit more material which emphasised on reading skill rather than other skills. Therefore the lecturer needs to take the initiative when he teaches using the textbook, so that it can cover all four language skills in a balanced manner, not just follow whatever is in the book as it is.

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