

Teaching Arabic Language: Its Implication on the Mindset of MSU-Sulu Laboratory High School Students

Lynie S. Kalayakan*

Abstract: This study aimed to investigate the content, systematic approach, preventive measures on action and the implication of infusing Arabic language teaching to liberate the mindset of students from purely secularize concept of culture. It used qualitative descriptive method in the analysis and interpretation of the collected data from the Focus Group Discussion participated by nine High School Arabic teachers in Sulu. Four research questions were prepared: [1] What should be the contents of teaching Arabic Language as Perceived by the Teachers and Students? [2] What are the systematic approaches in developing teaching Arabic Language teaching? [3] What are the implications of infusing Arabic Language on the mindset of the students? [4] What are the preventive measures on action to be done by teachers to liberate the mind of students from purely secularize concept of culture? The discussion utilized a facilitator and a documentor during the process. The facilitator is in-charged to align the discussions to the statement of the problem while the documentor is quoting the opinions and ideas presented by the participants. The Focus Group Discussion was conducted in the Graduate School Building of MSU-Sulu. In the light of the light of the findings of the study, it is concluded that Arabic language teaching is dependent on the nature and experienced of the learners in Madrasa. The students lack the experienced in Madrasah education should be given lecture on the huruful hidja iyya, that is introduction of the Arabic alphabets. The use of visual aids is very helpful in teaching Arabic language. As much as possible the teacher may use advance technology in teaching the Arabic language. Visual presentation can assist student to use the senses of sight and hearing in the learning process. Audio presentation helped the student to correct pronunciation with the help of the teacher instruction. Correct tajwid can be developed from hearing Qur'an reading by the experts reading of the Arabic language. Islamic values can be learned from the history of the pious people such as anbiya, sahabah, sunni imams and the story of the khulafaur-rashidin. The teacher should display as model in doing the Sunnah and the fardu Ibadah. The students are good imitator of good deeds. The learning by example method is very effective to introduce variation in doing things.

Keywords: Teaching Arabic language, mindset of students, implication to learning.

1. Introduction

Learning the Arabic Language is not new in the Province of Sulu. Long before the arrival of the Makdumin group to Simunul Island of Tawi-tawi which was latter proceeded to Sulu landed in Subah Datu, has started the learning of the

Arabic Language by local folks in Sulu. This researcher can recall back the learning styles of the murid and the Ka'dayang experience of learning the Arabic Language which was called the "Lihal Arabic Learning." In this style of teaching and learning the Qur'an, the Ka'dayang (guru or teacher) is sitting face to face with her murid (learner) and read the Qur'an verbally in correct tazwid (pronunciation) according to the Arabic accent in tawassut (short reading). The Qur'an was respectfully placed on top of the elevated cross-wood called lihal and sometimes in the absence of the cross-wood, pillow was used as the substitute. This method of teaching is called Muqari (mouth-to-mouth teaching). The guru reads the Qur'an aloud and the murid follow the reading by imitation, read the same letter or words in the same tone and pronunciation. The murid keeps on repeating the word or letter until it is memorized.

In the later years, many scholars arrived to Sulu. This is the time when the Madrasah system was established and practiced board work in teaching the Arabic Language. In Madrasah system, the guru (teacher) teaches the Arabic letters in sequence until memorized by the murid (students). In this system learning the Arabic Language at the same time the guru gives translation of the meaning of the Arabic words. The Madrasah system is similar to the secular education in the methods and styles of teaching. The guru also teaches grammar and composition but the instruction is in Arabic Language. In the beginning, the teaching takes place in the mosque, latter the madrasah was built near the mosque or as part of the extension of the mosque.

During the organization of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) a dramatic approach to resolve the Mindanao Conflict, it was recommendatory to include as one of the solutions to end up the insurgency problems of the Bangsamoro in Mindanao, the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) programs was established through Republic Act 1055. In this program the teaching of Arabic Language and Values Education was given the chance to be taught in the Secular Education System. The Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education formally taught in the Elementary and High Schools as part of the school curriculum. The teachers are the ALIVE teachers equipped with basic knowledge in Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education.

*Corresponding author: asdansalan@gmail.com

The government of the ARMM has failed to produce enough ALIVE teachers that corresponds to the elementary schools and high schools in the province of Sulu. Although there are accelerated programs to produce the ALIVE teachers but the programs do not suffice to fill up the needed ALIVE teachers.

This problem continues to exist in public schools in the province of Sulu. The problem is even become worse because the teaching of Arabic Language in the high schools is affected. The teachers in the High Schools have to teach the language from the very basic of teaching the vowels and consonants of the Arabic alphabets. There are many students graduated from the public elementary schools who do not acquire proper education in the ALIVE. Hence, the Arabic Language teachers in the high schools encountered problems on the method of teaching, because some of the students, the one taken ALIVE in the elementary school have acquired basic knowledge of writing Arabic Language, but there are many students who have not taken the ALIVE especially those elementary school pupils coming from the municipalities outside Jolo. The problems of the content and method of teaching in MSU-Sulu Laboratory High School has confronted the Arabic Teachers, therefore a scientific study should be conducted to make the teaching learning of Arabic Language more effective.

2. Statement of the Problem

The method of teaching the Arabic Language and Values Education in the High School level is not the only problem confronting the Arabic Teachers but also the content of the subject taught is also a dilemma since there is no proper curriculum in the high school. The teachers are given the leeway to select the content of the subject taught. The uniformity of the content is necessary and the effectiveness of the teaching method is essential to make the teaching of Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education more meaningful to the life of the Muslim Youth. Hence the following research problems are essential to seek for solutions. [1] What should be the contents of teaching Arabic Language as Perceived by the Teachers and Students? [2] What are the systematic approaches in developing teaching Arabic Language teaching? [3] What are the implications of infusing Arabic Language on the mindset of the students? [4] What are the preventive measures on action to be done by teachers to liberate the mind of students from purely secularize concept of culture?

3. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The traditional methods of learning the Koran verses whilst somewhat effective, clearly is outdated and does not suit the learning profile of the “modern” students. For example, it has been shown that the traditional methods failed at attracting and motivating students to learn to recite the surah (Purwanto, 1990). Students, in particular those with lower academic abilities, who are easily bored, and de-motivated to follow the lesson when being taught using the traditional methods (Sidin, 1998). Such issues with learning will clearly affect the student’s achievement as behavior and motivation are two important aspects that influence student’s learning performance

(Abdulrohman, 2010). Further, a recent study showed that student’s ability in reciting the Koran increased by only 62% after the teacher has used the previously mentioned traditional methods (Abdulrohman, 2010).

The cited study’s finding clearly indicated that the traditional teaching method is not optimal and was not able to attract and sustain the student’s interest to learn and recite the Koran. In response to this less than ideal scenario, Ismail and Zakaria (2010) suggested that religious teachers should consider utilizing a more modern teaching aids that use the current technology such as websites, videos and compact discs in their classroom teachings. Such methods clearly possess the ability to stimulate the students’ interest and engage their senses better than the traditional methods (Ajil Jasim, 1980). It was further argued that religious teachers should use the computer as teaching aid during lessons (Yusoff et. al., 2003). Many educators believe that computers can help the students learn the correct recitation in an interactive manner (Ismail and Zakaria, 2010). Indeed, a previous local study found that the subject’s content can be effectively delivered through the application of animated pedagogical agents (APA) as it managed to enhance the students’ involvement in the learning process (Md. Ghalib, 2006). Subsequently, this led the current investigators to develop an instructional design platform which might be useful for a more effective teaching and learning of the Islamic Koran verses. Thus, this present paper aims to describe the systematic development and implementation of the instructional platform design.

The strength of secular education has been rooted in the Province of Sulu for many decades already. The Tausug are attracted to the virtues brought about by the secular education, such as equip them to work abroad, local government agencies, malls and other business enterprises. Their minds have been set to this virtue to the extent of forgetting the virtues of reading Qur’an, performing salat, zikrullah and other virtuous acts that can compensate from the fire of hell in yawm-al-akhirat. The need to strengthen the approaches and provide measures to liberate the mindset of the youth from the secular education is highly necessary in the secular educational system. This study attempted to improve the teaching of Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education in the secular schools with develop approaches and measures to liberate the mindset of the Tausug youth from the bandage of secular education. This improvement is indicative of sufficient changes in behavior and the manners of performing the obligatory deeds as prescribed in the Qur’an and Sunnah as manifested in Islamic Shari’a. Figure 1 shows the conceptual paradigm of this study.

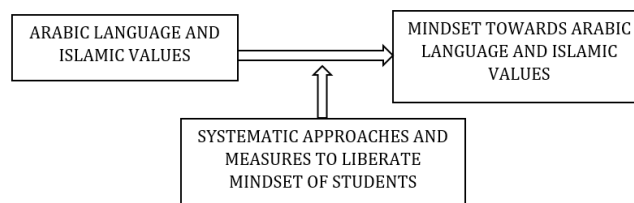


Fig. 1. Conceptual model

4. Research Method

This study employed the qualitative descriptive method to explain the content and method of teaching Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education. It explores further to determine the systematic approach and measures to liberate the mindset of the students from secular education. This study was conducted in Jolo, Sulu utilized the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education Teachers in the High Schools of Sulu as participants. It used Focus Group Discussion Guide Questionnaire to be answered by the participants. The Focus Group Discussion was conducted in MSU-Sulu Graduate School Building. The facilitator take charge for the initiation of the topics to be discussed in the FGD. The documentor was assigned to take the coverage of the discussion to enhance qualitative data.

5. Results

The content of teaching Arabic language depends on the nature of the students in class. There are some students who have enrolled in Madrasa in their community. The Arabic teacher, in the first place should conduct evaluation to find out the ability of the students in Arabic. If there is any student who has enrolled in the Madrasa should be given lesson different from the student who has no experienced or not enrolled in Madrasa. The students are not exposed to Madrasa education should introduce the “huruful hidja iyya” by introducing the Arabic alphabet. The moral values are given in the “nasihat” (oral lecture) in the form of “tarbiyah”. The content in nasihat are story of the pious people like Anbiya, Sahabah, Great Sunni Imam and Tawhid. The subject of Islamic Education is divided into various fields such as the Quran, Hadith, Tawhid, Aqidah (Faith), morals, and religious practices. This study refers to the teaching of Arabic Language and religious practice. Some parts of Islamic knowledge have their own objectives and content and hence they will require different teaching methods. According to Mohd Kassim (2010) it is important for teachers to master knowledge in the subject they teach, as well as how that knowledge is taught and the belief held during the planning and implementation of teaching. All the three elements need to be utilized by the teacher in the classroom to produce effective teaching and learning (Hafidz 2008).

There is no exactly systematic approach of teaching the Arabic language. The teaching condition is dependent on the nature and experiences of the students in the classroom. However, the teacher should prepare the lesson with specific objectives, apply method of teaching accompanied with appropriate visual aids presentation to assist student to use the five senses such as sense of hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling (touch), and taste. In learning Arabic language most importantly the students ask to read individually and performance activities to develop their interest. The use of technology is also suggested in teaching the Arabic language like film viewing, used of microchip on teaching Arabic, reading Ayah based on the tajwid of the expert. Islamic scholars such as Al-Ghazali (1939) in *Ihya 'Ulumuddin* had discussed in depth how effective education require a systematic, organized, orderly and gradual process of teaching, according to the level

of student ability. Ibn Khaldun (2000) have also stated that the process of teaching requires teaching skill or expertise, and even al-Syaibani (1991) asserted that teaching must take into account the students' willingness, ability and individual differences in the classroom. Therefore, Pedagogical Content Knowledge is not something strange in Islamic Education.

Exposure of the students to do the Islamic Da'wah. Learning Tawhid is most important part of Islamic Da'wah. Mastery of the book of hadith, so that students understand fiqhi and Islamic Shari'a. Specific activities should be performed to train students to give nasihat by which they can reflect on themselves the morale of the speech they delivered. Adnan (2002) also, immersion in worship will develop good character in Muslims as worship is a “long term process of training to mould a noble and moral individual in line with the Quran which explains that the relationship between religious practices with the pillars of faith, amongst them prayer and tithe, and believing in the day of judgement (al-Naml 27:3), and fasting, makes someone more devout (al-Baqarah 2:183), and religious practices become a contributing factors to a successful Believer who will inherit heaven (al-Mu'minin 23:1-11). Allah urges the Believers to do good, to be responsible and accountable and always under Allah the Almighty observation (at-Tawbah 9:105) and always pursuing to do a good deed (Al-Baqarah 2:148; Al-Anbiya 21:73).

The students are exposed to secular education since the kindergarten until high school level. Acculturation is difficult because they positively taking the secular teaching as their way of life. They believed secular education can give them the opportunity to work with the government. As a matter of fact, their parents are convinced that Islamic education cannot support the selection of occupation. But the parents should cooperate the Arabic Teacher and Religious advocators to start the culture at home, then to school, then to community at large. Practice of Sunnah and performance of the obligator acts can change the life of the students. The manipulation of the activities in school should be focused to Islamic way and teaching. Among the methods that can be used for effective teaching and learning of religious practice subject is storytelling, discussions, simulations, library research, writing articles, field trips, brainstorming, writing scrapbooks, demonstrations and forecasting future events, a visit with the students to the mosque, prayer room, religious institutions or visiting renowned religious leaders, celebrating major religious festivals, storytelling, question and answer, problem based learning, revision, practical, demonstrations, acting, and role playing (Muhammad Salih, 1980; Ghazali, 2001). Among the methods that can be utilized in teaching are memorization and understanding, demonstrations, doing practical, simulation, socio-dramatic play, role play and discussion (Ab. Halim et al., 2004; Kamarul Azmi & Ab. Halim, 2012). With regard to techniques, Ahmad (2004) stated that it is the teachers' skills and behaviors in the organization and implementation of teaching methods in any teaching and learning activity.

6. Conclusion

In the light of the light of the findings of the study, it is

concluded that Arabic language teaching is dependent on the nature and experienced of the learners in Madrasa. The students lack the experienced in Madrasah education should be given lecture on the huruful hidja iyya, that is introduction of the Arabic alphabets. The use of visual aids is very helpful in teaching Arabic language. As much as possible the teacher may use advance technology in teaching the Arabic language. Visual presentation can assist student to use the senses of sight and hearing in the learning process. Audio presentation helped the student to correct pronunciation with the help of the teacher instruction. Correct tajwid can be developed from hearing Qur'an reading by the experts reading of the Arabic language. Islamic values can be learned from the history of the pious people such as anbiya, sahabah, sunni imams and the story of the khulafa-ur-rashidin. The teacher should display as model in doing the Sunnah and the fardu Ibadah. The students are good imitator of good deeds. The learning by example method is very effective to introduce variation in doing things.

References

- [1] Abd. Majid M., Z., & Mc Caffer R. (1997). Assessment of work performance of maintenance contractors in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Management in Engineering*. 12(2), 44-49.
- [2] Abdulrohman, R. (2010). The study on high school in Jawa Timur Indonesia. *International Journal for Islamic Education Studies*. 1(1), 25-34.
- [3] Ajil Jasim, A. (1980). *Ma'alim fi tarbiyah*. Kuwait: Maktabah Al-Manar.
- [4] Andre, E., Rist, T., & Muller, J. (1999). Employing AI methods to control the behavior of animated interface agents. *Applied Artificial Intelligence*. 13, 415-448.
- [5] Purwanto, N. (1990). *Educational psychology*. Bandung: Rosdakarya.
- [6] Dick, W., & Carey, L. (1996). *The Systematic Design of Instruction*. (4th ed.). New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.
- [7] Ismail, M., F., & Zakaria, S., N. (2010). Research on Surah Al-Fatihah recitation among Politeknik Kuching students. *Jabatan Pengajian Am, Politeknik Kuching: Sarawak*.
- [8] Md. Ghalib, M., F. (2006). Design, development & evaluation of a Web Courseware with a Pedagogical Agent. Ph.D. Thesis, Universiti Sains Malaysia.
- [9] Muhammad Y. (1993), Islamization: A Revivalist Response to Modernity. *Muslim Education Quarterly*, Vol. 10. No. 2.
- [10] Nasr, S. V. R. (1991), Islamization of Knowledge: A Critical Review. *Islamic Studies Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute*, pp. 321-342, vol. 30, no. 3.
- [11] Nuseibah, S. (1993), Epistemology. In: S.H. Nasr, O. Leaman (eds.) *History of Islamic Philosophy*. Part II. Qum: Ansariyan Publications.
- [12] Parsons, T. (1975), The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society, *Harvard Educational Review*, pp. 297-318, vol. 29, no. 4.
- [13] Prokop, M. (2003), Saudi Arabia: The Politics of Education. *International Affairs*, pp.77- 89, vol. 79, no. 1.
- [14] Roy, D. (1992), Saudi Arabian Education: Development Policy. *Middle Eastern Studies*, pp. 477-508, vol. 2, no. 8.
- [15] Rugh, W. A. (2002), Education in Saudi Arabia: Choices and Constraints, *Middle East Policy*, pp. 40-55, vol. 6, no. 9.
- [16] Ronald, A. L. (2001), Two Sides of the Same Coin: Modernity and Tradition in Islamic Education in Indonesia. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 3.
- [17] Said, H.M (1981), Growing up in a World of Challenges: Revising a Program for Muslim Children's Education. *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol. 4, no. 1.
- [18] Saha, L. J. & Zubrycki, J (1994), *Classical Sociological Theories of Education*.
- [19] Sidin, R. (1998), *The thinking of education*. Shah Alam: Penerbit Fajar Bakti.
- [20] T. Husen and N. Postlethwaite (eds). *International Encyclopaedia of Education*. Oxford.
- [21] Pergamon Sirozi, M. (2004), Secular-religious debates on the Indonesian National Education System: colonial legacy and a search for national identity in education. *Intercultural Education*, vol. 15, no. 2.
- [22] Talbani, A. (1996), Pedagogy, Power, and Discourse: Transformation of Islamic Education. *Comparative Education Review*, pp. 66-82, vol. 40, no. 6.
- [23] Tinker, C. (2009), Rights, Social Cohesion and Identity: Arguments for and against State Funded Muslim Schools in Britain. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 539-553.
- [24] Turner, J.H. & Mitchell, D. E (1994), Contemporary Sociological Theories of Education," in T. Husen and N. Postlethwaite (Eds). *International Encyclopaedia of Education*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- [25] Umar, M.S., 2003. Profiles of New Islamic Schools in Northern Nigeria, *The Maghreb Review*, vol. 28, nos. 2-3: 146-169.
- [26] Yusoff, M., A. Abdulaziz, A., M., & Ahmad Kamel Mohamed. (2003), The effectiveness of iqra' as method in reciting Koran. *Current Issues of Quran and Sunnah Studies*. Bangi: Faculty of Qur'an and Sunnah, Islamic University Malaysia: 101-114.