

WCES 2014

Arabic Teaching and Learning: A Model From Indonesian Muslim Minority

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Abstract

Pesantren (Islamic boarding school) has a long history on the development of national education system in Indonesia. This initiative is expanded through Indonesia, include to the muslim minority area. Therefore, this paper will explore how *pesantren* engage on their activity in teaching and learning of foreign language. Those foreign languages are Arabic and English. This study will focus only on Arabic as a main source of Islamic understanding. Research was accomplished in *Pesantren Nurul Yaqin*, West Papua, Indonesia. Qualitative approach was employed during study cycles. In-depth interview and non-participant observation were conducted to collect data. Data collection was performed from February to May. Research findings show that *pesantren* preserve traditional Arabic teaching and learning processes. They still carry out *badongan* (individual) and *sorogan* (classical). In addition to these performs they proceed other strategies and method to enhance students' language skill. There are seventeen practices that *pesantren* conducted. Those programs were linkage through 24 hours living environment line up. Finally, techniques and activities were implemented to extend students' language achievement.

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Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of WCES 2014

Keywords: *pesantren*; teaching; learning; muslim; school;

1. Introduction

There are several issues that are the main focus of this study, namely the relationship between (i) Arabic education, (ii) *pesantren*, and (iii) culture. Language is instrumental part as the media in which human communicate with each other. However, Arabic is not only used for human communication but it is also the chosen language for worship in Islam. Therefore, Arabic holds a special place and importance as a language that is used in religious

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activities. Baring (2011) stated religion and culture (including the Arabic language) as a union of principles that cannot be separated on the learning. Islam is the main essence Arab of culture. Then, the culture is Arab, which has a special place in Islam. Arab culture influences various Islamic cultures. In regards to this, we must avoid understanding that the two is one of the same or go together exclusively. The Arabic language is an important language for the Muslim community everywhere because it is the language of worship, a language frequently used by Muslims and a language that is believed by all as the language chosen by Allah (Boudelaa & Marslen-Wilson (2013). This can be observed in the use of Arabic during worship rituals in Islam, whereby in prayers, hajj and all sorts of other activities of worship Muslims must be performed in Arabic. Religion sought to fashion individual in maintaining activities during his life. This phenomenon processes to conceptualize social world and the place (Pace, 2011). Finally, there is a need to examine the teaching and learning of Arabic. Pesantren was chosen as the location of study, where Arabic is taught intensively. This article will explore how pesantren in West Papua, Indonesia implement teaching and learning on Arabic language.

2. Previous Research

In Islamic civilization literature, there are accounts on Arabic being in line with various imperial or development of civilization (Wolfe, 2012), 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 are updated 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. This definition was presented by Uhlmann (2012). Specifically, Arabic in Indonesia has been circulated through learning in pesantrens. In addition, pesantren is a special institution that aims to strengthen understanding of Islam as a religion from various aspects including deep understanding of Arabic as a tool to know about Islam. Pesantren is a specific educational institution that has roots in the long history of education in Indonesia. Islamic education institution began to develop around 1831, after its separation from the palace. With an important role left open, the pesantren took the role that is most important in the community. The pesantren cares deeply in empowering the public especially in the field of education (Lawson, 2010; Scott, 2011). The role is played independently and consistently. After a long process, the pesantren was finally given the responsibility and trust by the community as a centre of Islamic education excellence. Furthermore, when a member of the community had a problem related to education and religion, the pesantren became the first and main point of reference. This shows how highly valued the pesantren instrumental part of Indonesia society. Before the Indonesian independent, pesantren already exist. The adaptation pesantren in supporting teaching and learning shows that the institutions implement information communication technology as a part of teaching (Wekke and Hamid, 2013). This adjustment is an initiative to allow teacher and students in acquiring modern perspective. On the other hand, religion is about tradition and culture, but this practice in maintaining attainment on high feature of scholarship. Another perspective was presented Wekke and Lubis (2008) in exploring multicultural background on creating instruction in pesantren milieu. Those research as a conclusion that pesantren did not separate their activity from recently development on the world. They tried to extend the organization as part of modern improvement. Pesantren is well known of development from inside initiative. It is a peaceful place to participate through the growth of the nation. The history shows that started from religious activities, recently the organization supply educational progress, environment involvement, and political contribution. The institutions hold a special place for the society, since they join in many ways of live.

3. Research Method

The use of a research plan in this study refers to several matters. The purpose of the study is to find the method for learning Arabic and for that, it utilized a qualitative research plan with a phenomenological approach. Due to the type of research being grounded theory, and features qualitative characteristics, it is a given that the study aims to understand the object of research by following the process that leads to a behaviour. Then, a phenomenological

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