INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS



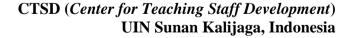




Proceedings of International Colloquium on LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

Edited by:

Hisyam Zaini Lokman Abd Wahid Adib Sofia



in cooperation with

IPG (Institut Pendidikan Guru) Kampus Bahasa Melayu, Malaysia

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THE COMPOSING OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING GOAL IN THE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITIES IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This writing focuses on the composing of the Arabic language learning goal in the Islamic universities in Indonesia, as an effort to increase the Arabic language learning which has not shown the sufficient signs of success. The formulation of the Arabic language learning goal which is clear and correct is very required in composing the effective material of the Arabic language learning in the Islamic universities in Indonesia. The formulation should be composed in details and clearly in order to be the clear reference in composing the material of Arabic language learning. The formulation may refer to the vision and mission and the college quality objectives, and also may refer to the formulation or guideliness composed by any institution which concern with the development of the foreign language learning. Besides, it also needs to observe the learning background and objectives and also the characteristic of the target language or the Arabic language. Based on the condition of Arabic language learning in the Islamic universities in Indonesia recently, and the guide to standard proficiency of performing foreign language which is composed by the international institutions that concern with in the development of foreign language learning, for the time being, the objectives of Arabic language learning in Islamic universities in Indonesia are directed to the language skill or focused on the effective communication skill, without over-emphasize on grammar or gawa'id.

Keywords: arabic language learning, language skill, effective communication

A. Introduction

There are a lot of statements of the observers and practitioners of Arabic language teaching in many Islamic universities (PTAI) in Indonesia that recently there is no signs of sufficient success. It can be seen, among other things, from the fact that how many Indonesia people that have learnt Arabic language for years in universities but they still have difficulties in understanding the written texts in Arabic

and in speaking with the Arabic native speakers. Not a bit numbers of university students who learn Arabic language during some semesters or some semester credit units (sks) in universities but they still have not felt yet the significant usage or development in their Arabic language learning. In a number of Islamic universities the Arabic language frequently becomes the ghost or the horrible subject for a number of students.

The statement above certainly has no intention to degrade any effort that has been performed in a number of universities in Indonesia to develop the qualified Arabic language learning effort, and also not to understate a number of the achieved success. The above statement is an effort to describe a little bit of reality in the Arabic language learning in universities, in order to encourage more the Arabic language teacher and the policy maker. This certainly is a problem and also a big challenge for the whole Arabic language lecturers and for the academic policy maker in the Islamic universities to endeavor more to the quality improvement of foreign language learning, especially the Arabic language, in the Islamic universities in Indonesia.

As the lecturer or a person who deals with the Arabic language teaching, such a reality needs to be examined carefully. It might be true that the poor reality above is caused by the unsuitable teaching material or method. Or it might be caused by the unclear goal in Arabic language teaching. Therefore, the improvement efforts and the development of Arabic language learning require to constantly supported and improved.

In connection with that, this simple writing is trying to contribute suggestions or to share ideas about any effort to increase the quality of Arabic language learning in PTAI. This writing focuses on the composing of the Arabic language learning goal.

B. Urgency of Formulating the Clear Objectives in Language Learning

Formerly it needs to determine the Arabic language learning objectives that are expected to attain to be able to compose the good Arabic language learning material. The clearer the learning objectives is formulated, the clearer the direction of composing the material of Arabic language learning. The statement or formulation of the clear

¹ Azhar Arsyad, *Bahasa Arab dan Metode Pengajarannya*, Yogyakarta, Pustaka Pelajar, 2004, p. 121.

learning objective is very important to determine the learning content or material.²

The Arabic language learning that has not been composed clearly will show the unclear potency of the direction of composing the material of Arabic language learning. Parable that is often delivered to clarify the urgency of composing the clear learning objectives before determining the learning material is like someone who wants to do the traveling certainly needs to know the objectives and the direction of his traveling before he doing that.

As the illustration, there is an example of a traveling that we want to do. If we want to do the traveling, there are a lot of things to be prepared. The most important preparation is the clarity of the traveling objectives, or an answer to the question about where we will do the traveling. Will we go to Jakarta or Surabaya or any other places? The clarity of the traveling objectives will be the main consideration of the next question, for instance, how we can get there, what we should bring, and many others. Every activity of life must have the clear objectives.

If we do the traveling without previously knowing the objectives or direction of the traveling, probably we only will go around in the traveling without the clear direction. In connection with the Arabic language learning in the Islamic universities in Indonesia, it requires to determine the clear objectives of the learning. Do not let the learning material is composed or chosen without knowing the learning objectives.

The requirement to determine the learning objectives before composing the learning material can be seem in the components of design of the language learning material which relates to each other as presented in the following description.



² I.S.P. Nation & John Macalister, *Language Curriculum Design* (New York, Routledge, 2010), p. 7

The description above shows that the main components in the Arabic language learning design clearly are very related to each other. The learning content or material is very related to the learning objectives. It needs to compose the appropriate learning objectives in order to be able to compose the appropriate Arabic language learning material.

C. The Way to Compose the Arabic Language Learning Objectives

A possible questions emerging is: how to formulate the appropriate Arabic language learning objectives to be applied in the Islamic universities in Indonesia?

The early step to formulate the Arabic language learning objectives is by observeing the vision and mission of the Islamic universities or by referring to the quality objectives that is determined by the universities in foreign language learning. For examples, to formulate the Arabic language learning goal in UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, we can refer to, among other things, one of the quality objectives which states that the graduates of UIN Sunan Kalijaga must be able to communicate globally.

The quality objectives of UIN Sunan Kalijaga actually consists of seven items. One item relevant to the foreign language learning is the sixth item which states: "The graduates must be able to communicate globally" with the TOEFL and TOAFL minimal score 450. The quality objectives of UIN Sunan Kalijaga might be considered as the main reference in composing the Arabic language learning goal, besides the vision of UIN Sunan Kalijaga which states: "Superior and leading in the integration and development of Islamic studies and science for civilization"

There might be an Islamic university that has not contained any clear item in its vision and mission which can be the reference in composing the foreign language learning goal. There could be a university that has not had the quality objectives which is related to the language learning or which has not contained specifically any item of the foreign language mastery or learning. For the Islamic universities which vision, mission and quality objectives have not clearly contained any item as the reference in composing the foreign language learning goal in order to compose the Arabic language learning goal, it would be better to observe the language learning or

skills which is composed by some institutions or individuals which are concerned in the foreign language learning.³

One institution that has composed the language competency or skills which can be a reference in formulating the foreign language learning goal is the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).4 The institution that states its mission to provide vision, leadership and support for quality teaching and learning of languages makes a kind of guidelines on the proficiency in foreign language which can be a guidance in composing the Arabic language learning.

ACTFL divides the language proficiency into three levels, those are the novice level, the intermediate level, and the advanced level. Each level is divided into three, those are low, mid and high, so the number of levels is nine. After the nine levels there is still one highest level which is called the superior level, so the total number of levels is ten.

As an example of Arabic language proficiency that can be the reference in determining the Arabic language learning goal, the followings are the listening skills/ /istima and the reading skills/qirā`ah. Considering the limited space, here it will be presented the listening and reading skills for the intermediate low level.

For the listening skills, according to the ACTFL guidelines, someone who learns foreign language in the intermediate low level must have the following competency:

"Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombination of learned elements in a limited number of content areas, particularly if strongly supported by the situational context. Content refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and routine tasks, such as getting meals and receiving simple instructions and directions. Listening tasks pertain primarily to spontaneous face-to-face conversations. Understanding is often uneven; repetition and rewording may be necessary. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently".

³ About the details of Arabic language learning gol, it can be seen in Fathi Ali Yunus, Tashmīm Manhaj li Ta'līm al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah li al-Ajānib, Dār al-Tsaqafah, Kairo, t.th, p. 196-217, and p. 98-99

⁴ To know further about the profile of American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), please browse the web page : http://actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1

Whereas for the reading skills, the language competency or proficiency that should be attained by people who learn in the intermediate low level is as follows:

"Able to understand main ideas and/or some facts from the simplest connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. Such texts are linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure, for example chronological sequencing. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make only minimal suppositions or to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples include messages with social purposes or information for- the widest possible audience, such as public announcements and short, straightforward instructions dealing with public life. Some misunderstandings will occur".

Besides the ACTFL guidelines, the formulation of composing the Arabic language learning can also be referred to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment, often abbreviated as CEFR. On this CEFR it contains what should be performed by those who learn foreign language in reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. The explanation for each level can be seen in the following table:⁵

Level	Description
A 1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and
	very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a
	concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and
	can ask and answer questions about personal details such as
	where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things
	he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other
	person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions
	related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very
	basic personal and family information, shopping, local
	geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and
	routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of
	information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe
	in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate

⁵ Further explanation about The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, can be seen at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/common_europenan framework of reference for languages

	environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on
	familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school,
	leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise
	whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
	Can produce simple connected text on topics which are
	familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences
	and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give
	reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both
	concrete and abstract topics, including technical
	discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact
	with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular
	interaction with native speakers quite possible without
	strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a
	wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical
	issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various
	options.
C 1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts,
	and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself
	fluently and spontaneously without much obvious
	searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and
	effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.
	Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on
	complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
C2	
CZ	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken
	and written sources, reconstructing arguments and
	accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express
	him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely,
	differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most
	complex situations.
1	

A guideline on the language proficiency which is composed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the language skills which is contained in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages can be the reference in composing the Arabic language learning goal in the Islamic universities in Indonesia. However, those guidelines should not be taken innocently. The guidelines should be adjusted by the

objective condition in every university by concerning the learning goal and characteristics of Arabic language as presented in the following.

D. Observing the Learning Goal and Characteristics of the Target Language

Before designing or composing the effective Arabic language learning goal, the Arabic teacher should observe the background of the learners who learning Arabic language with him. Besides, he should observe their purpose to learn Arabic language. In order to get clarity of the learners' goal in learning the foreign language and also of their background, it needs to do a kind of need assessment to the learners before determining the learning goal.

According to Douglas Brown, the teacher's knowledge about the learners' goal is one of the most important things in the language teaching principle. The teacher needs to identify the emotional, personal, or intellectual reasons of the learners to learn other languages except their mother tongue.6

Another thing that is also important in composing the Arabic language learning goal is an identification of the target language characteristics, in this case the identification of the Arabic language characteristics. By this characteristic identification, it can find the similarities and differences between the target language and the learners' mother tongue. The knowledge of the similarities and differences between the Arabic and Indonesian language can facilitate the teacher in composing the learning goal to carry out the learning process activity.

Substantially, the Arabic and Indonesian language have a number of differences and similarities. The different items of both languages will give difficulties to the learners in learning Arabic language. On the other hand, the similar items of both languages will facilitate the Arabic language learning..

By recognizing the differences between the Arabic and Indonesian language, the Arabic language teacher and learners will be more easily estimate the possibility of mistakes that might happen and the effort of correcting the mistakes. As an illustration, a number of Arabic language characteristics can explain the differences and similarities between the Arabic and Indonesian language.⁷

⁶ Brown, H. Douglas, Principle of Language Learning and Teaching, New York, Addison Wesley Longman, 2000, hlm. 3.

⁷ A good explanation about the difference of the Arabic and Malay language and its implementation on the Arabic language learning can be seen

One important characteristic in Arabic language that cannot be found in Indonesian language is the distinction of masculine and feminine. In every noun of Arabic language, there usually is the distinction of masculine and feminine In Arabic language, an adjective for masculine noun must be in masculine form, and an adjective for feminine noun must be in feminine form, too.

In Indonesian language, there is no division of nouns to be masculine and feminine as recognized in Arabic language. In Indonesian language, to express a noun as masculine or feminine, it usually is added by particular words like "perempuan" "laki-laki" if the word is aimed to the humans ('āqil).

Besides that, in Arabic language there is also the numeral of singular (مُفْرَد), dual (مُفْرَد) and plural (جَمْع). Indonesian language does not recognize the numeral like that. To show that a noun is plural, Indonesian language usually repeats that noun twice. For examples, a word "buku", is repeated twice to be "buku-buku" to make it plural. Sometimes it uses a word "beberapa" or "para" to make that noun plural like "beberapa buku" and "para pelajar".

The other characteristic of the Arabic language is the phenomena of *i'rāb* which does not exist in Indonesian language. The phenomena of *i'rāb* here means a change of row/form that occurs behind a word conforming to the word's position in a sentence composition. In Indonesian language there is no phenomena of *i'rāb*. This phenomenon is one of the big difficulties that will be faced by the Indonesian learners who learn Arabic language, which can cause a number of mistakes for the Indonesian learners.

• . .

in Muhammad Zain, Ahammiyah Ma'rifah Jawānib al-Ikhtilāf bayn al-'Arabiyyah wa al-Malaywiyyah fī Ta'līm al-Nahw al-'Arabiy li al-Dārisīn al-Malaywiyyīn, the paper was presented in An International Seminar of Arabic between the Challenge of Extinction and the Prospect of Development, University of Al-Azhar Indonesia, Jakarta, 22-24 Juli 2010. See also The Implementation of Contrastive Analysis in Translation, http://burleburen.blogspot.com/2013/01/the-implementation-of-contrastive.html; http://catatankba.blogspot.com/2011/12/ Karakteristik Bahasa Arab, karakteristik-bahasa-arab.html; Karakteristik Bahasa dan Penerapannya, http://nanoazza.wordpress.com/008/07/03/ karakteristikbahasa-arab-dan-penerapannya/; Karakteristik Bahasa fajristainjusi.blogspot.com/2009/12/karateristik-bahasa-arab 17.html, Perbandingan Karakteristik Bahasa Arab dengan Bahasa Indonesia, http://muhamadridwanfaisal.wordpress.com/2012/06/06/perbandingankarakteristik-bahasa-arab-dengan-bahasa-indonesia/, accessed in 8 November 2013.

As being presented above, the knowledge of Arabic language characteristics can help the teacher in estimating the possibilities of difficulties and mistakes that might be experienced by the Arabic language learners, and also can facilitate the effort of correcting the mistakes. Thus, an understanding of the Arabic language characteristics is very important in composing the learning goal and in performing the learning process activity.

E. Conclusion

In order to compose the material of Arabic language learning correctly, it needs to formulate the learning objectives clearly. The formulation should be composed in detail and clearly to be a reference in composing the material of Arabic language learning. The formulation refers to the vision and mission and the quality objectives of PTAI, and also refers to the formulation or guidelines being composed by any institution which concern with the foreign learning learning development

If referring to the guidelines of the standard competency or skills (proficiency) that is composed by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, and by seeing the condition of the Arabic language learning in Islamic universities recently, the Arabic language learning goal should be more directed to four language abilities, those are abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing, without over emphasizing on grammar or *qawa'id*. The language learning goal should be focused on the effective communication skills.