
Investigating the Effectiveness of the Content of the Arabic Language Curriculum in Indonesia: National University of Malang for Sample

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Abstract:

The aim of this research work is to identify the extent of the usefulness of the content of the Arabic Language Curriculum in the Indonesia, thus the researchers have chosen National University of Malang in Indonesia as a case study. Therefore, they evaluated the content of the Arabic Language Curriculum in National University of Malang, Indonesia under the light of Communication Approach in the Arabic Teaching Language where they distributed questionnaires to the lecturers of the university concerned in order to get facts on the content of the Arabic Language Curriculum therein, then they analysed and discussed the findings. The Communication Approach in the Teaching Arabic for Non-Native Speakers observes that Arabic language is a communication means, and it is necessary that its teaching be made for this purpose. Therefore, the existence of the suitable content- through the teaching of which lecturer can empower his students on the communication skills in Arabic language- is a very important issue in the teaching of Arabic language under the light of this approach. The researchers have consequently arrived at an outcome that the content of Arabic language curriculum in National

University of Malang in Indonesia consists of the language components through which lecturers are enabled to train their students on the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Thus, it means that the curriculum suits the doctrine of the communication approach in the mode of Teaching of Arabic Language for Non-Native Speakers.

Key words: Content, Curriculum, Arabic, Language, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

This is a descriptive analytical research which is purposely identifying the effectiveness of the content of the curriculum of Arabic teaching in National University of Malang – Indonesia, as it was indicated in the abstract. In order to successfully arrive into the objective of this study, a questionnaire has been designed and carried out on a specimen from among the lecturers of the university. Generally, in this research work, we have successfully treated modern trends in teaching Arabic language as well as concept, scopes and basis of evaluation in line with content of curriculum of Arabic teaching in this university. The research was restricted, in its spatial scope, to the Arabic Language lecturers of National University of Malang, Indonesia. Likewise, the research was limited, in its scientific scope, into the content of the curriculum of Arabic teaching in this university.

The researchers made use of questionnaire and observation in data collection, as they prepared and forwarded to the lecturers, a questionnaire aiming at identification of the current facts on some new conditions which are connected to the content of the curriculum of Arabic teaching in this university. As for the observation, the researchers viewed the Arabic teaching activity in the institute through class attendance during some Arabic class periods. That action

enriched the research as the researchers could observe the class activities closely.

THE CONTENT OF CURRICULUM IN THE LIGHT OF THE COMMUNICATION APPROACH

This approach is based on the purpose that language is part of life, as it fundamentally focused on simplification of communicative procedure among the societal individuals since the means of linguistic communication is language through its written and verbal vocabularies. Also, the meanings indicated by those vocabularies portray the motive while the reaction of the receiver depicts the response. Meanwhile, all of them constitute the result of reasonable and functional activities between the two parties of the communicative procedure.

Therefore, communication commences when the sender develops interest in sending a message which may be out of a response to a specific inducement or out of initiation through the posing of another exciting impulse in the domain of verbal or written communication. That means the role of the sender is manifested in the symbolic constructions. In contrary, the receiving party is perceived in a trying effort to understand the spoken illustrations or written symbols which are contained in the message with an attempt to comprehend it in the light of his capacities and experiences. The meaning of that is that the role of the receiver is manifested in the emancipation of these symbols. Based on that, it is inferred that communication may be either spoken or written, direct or indirect. Whatever category of communication that may be engaged, man is always in need of it, and he is therefore mandated to study Arabic Language Teaching from this angle.

On this basis, the concerned people in Arabic teaching have agitated for its inclusion in teaching module in the light of the concept of communication theory and its parts. In addition,

the agitators appealed for necessary study of communication activities on the basis that it is an integrated system in which various elements are mutually overlapping, interacting and interpenetrating in the sphere of the targets of the communication procedures.

The linguistic communication is constituted from major elements which are collectively integrative in order to realize the objective for the sake of which the communication is made available. These elements are: Sender, Receiver, Linguistic message, Sending Channel, Linguistic code and Communication environment. Each element must necessarily be featured with inevitable conditions in order to insure the success of linguistic communication procedure.

According to the Traditional Teaching Methods, language curriculum development and selection of its contents were made on the basis of principles and linguistic patterns, but according to this modern communicative approach, selection of contents is outstandingly based on the commutative attitudes, not on linguistic principles (Muhsin Ali Atiyyah: 2008).

In the light of the communicative approach, the goal of teaching Arabic language is the ability to communicate in the target language (Sandra: 1997). This is in contrast to previous views in which grammatical competence was commonly given top priority (Stephen: 2003). Communicative language teaching (CLT), or the communicative approach, is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interactions both the means and the ultimate goal of study. Language learners in environments utilizing CLT techniques, learn and practice the Target language through the interaction with one another and the instructor, the study of "authentic texts" (those written in the target language for purposes other than language learning), and through the use of the language both in class and outside of class. CLT also focuses on the lecturer being a

facilitator, rather than an instructor. Furthermore, the approach is a non-methodical system that does not use a textbook series to teach English, but rather works on developing sound oral/verbal skills prior to reading and writing (wikipedia.org).

Learners converse about personal experiences with partners, and instructors teach topics outside of the realm of traditional grammar, in order to promote language skills in all types of situations. This method also claims to encourage learners to incorporate their personal experiences into their language learning environment, and to focus on the learning experience in addition to the learning of the target language (David:1991).

Language teaching was originally considered a cognitive matter, mainly involving memorization. It was later thought, instead, to be socio-cognitive, meaning that language can be learned through the process of social interaction. Today, however, the dominant technique in teaching any language is communicative language teaching (CLT). It was Noam Chomsky's theories in the 1960s, focusing on competence and performance in language learning, that gave rise to communicative language teaching, but the conceptual basis for CLT was laid in the 1970s by linguists Michael Halliday, who studied how language functions are expressed through grammar, and Dell Hymes, who introduced the idea of a wider communicative competence instead of Chomsky's narrower linguistic competence (William: 1981).

The rise of CLT in the 1970s and early 1980s was partly in response to the lack of success with traditional language teaching methods and partly due to the increase in demand for language learning. In Europe, the advent of the European Common Market, an economic predecessor to the European Union, led to migration in Europe and an increased population of people who needed to learn a foreign language for work or for

personal reasons. At the same time, more children were given the opportunity to learn foreign languages in school, as the number of secondary schools offering languages rose worldwide as part of a general trend of curriculum-broadening and modernization, and foreign-language study ceased to be confined to the elite academies. In Britain, the introduction of comprehensive schools, which offered foreign-language study to all children rather than to the select few in the elite grammar schools, greatly increased the demand for language learning. This increased demand included many learners who struggled with traditional methods such as grammar translation, which involves the direct translation of sentence after sentence as a way to learn language. These methods assumed that students were aiming for mastery of the target language, and that students were willing to study for years before expecting to use the language in real life. However, these assumptions were challenged by adult learners, who were busy with work, and some schoolchildren, who were less academically gifted, and thus could not devote years to learning before being able to use the language. Educators realized that to motivate these students an approach with a more immediate reward was necessary (Rosamond: 1988).

An influential development in the history of communicative language teaching was the work of the Council of Europe in creating new language syllabi. When communicative language teaching had effectively replaced situational language teaching as the standard by leading linguists, the Council of Europe made an effort to once again bolster the growth of the new method. This led to the Council of Europe creating a new language syllabus. Education was a high priority for the Council of Europe, and they set out to provide a syllabus that would meet the needs of European immigrants. Among the studies used by the council when designing the course was one by the British linguist, D. A. Wilkins, that

defined language using "notions" and "functions", rather than more traditional categories of grammar and vocabulary. The new syllabus reinforced the idea that language could not be adequately explained by grammar and syntax, and instead relied on real interaction (Richards, Jack; Rodgers and Theodore: 2014).

Also, Ahmad 'Iyd 'Awd (2000) held the view that for successful language teaching as communication medium, proficiency in communication must necessarily be taken care of. However, communication itself is a serious complex skill; as it encompasses more than mastery of language structures. Therefore, it is necessary to take into consideration that the spoken communication is appropriate in line with various stages, like purpose of the talker, relation between the talker (speaker) and the receiver, attitude, subject matter and linguistic context. Therefore, language teaching for communication, as it aims to prepare learners for the acquisition and development of the four language skills, consolidation on communication skills and exploitation of linguistic principles for the purpose of discharging specific communicative functions on particular situations, it also works on the creation of individual and collective natural situations for direct communication through a language content in which there will be focus on training for oral conversation at first instance. Then there is expectation that it will give training on the remaining language skills whereby the learner will become conversant with social meanings applicable to various language structures and be able to select language expressions which are suitable for different communicative situations. For this, the communicative approach in language teaching requires emplacement and linguistic activities in the position of practical exercise where the reliance on the memorization of the theoretical principles is excluded. It also provide opportunity to students to use language practically, pay stable attention to all

language skills and avoidance of strictness on one side at the expense of other sides. Language is comprehensively integrative and any defect that inflicts any part or sort of it will penetrate to the whole language, and it may cause its total malfunction in the performance of its major role which is manifested in communication and mutual understanding, exchange of experiences, skills and views. Purpose of that is that communication approach is much concerned with the use of language, pursuit of various systems and exercising of its principles as well as emplacing it in the position of practical application.

Antwan Sayyaah (2006) wrote that the Integrative Method in Arabic Language Teaching is not peculiar to the Grammatical teaching, but rather it goes beyond it to the language learning through its various activities; whereby the grammatical teaching is supposed to be accomplished by their means, through the literal texts whether poetical or prosodic as well as the reading and dictation teaching. This means that pupil should be taught speaking, listening, reading and writing skills together with textual tasting and criticism simultaneously without separation between them in a way that language is presentable to learner as learning subject based on its nature and integrative perception whereby the artificial separations among its branches are invalidated. However, this system does not concede from knowledge except the integrative kind of it in view of the fact that it is the perfect method for the realization of the fact in which we live, the effective means for solving problems and hard situations which confront us in our lifetimes.

Muhsin Ali Atiyyah (2008) added that this approach is built on the idea of correlation between various subjects and interaction with them erupting from unification of knowledge. The approach necessitates the review of the curriculum arrangement on its originators whereby the barriers are

terminable among the various subjects which are integrative with each other, to the extent that various experiences are forwarded in a collaborative portrait leading to consolidation of learner to comprehend the relations between teaching subjects and the expertise imparted on the learner.

Integration is a term used for a system of the arrangement of the elements of linguistic expertise provided to students as well as teaching manner that can ensure its connectivity and unification in order to enable them perceive the interrelationships and their exploitation in their linguistic delivery. This is achievable through an integrative linguistic content in which the guidance exercises and linguistic drillings, linguistic principles with language skills, type of required performance through a poetical or prosodic text, or oral or written conversational situation are interconnected. It must also include teaching language through a method in which the procedural activities are based on integration, exercise, drilling and evaluation of students originally. Thus, language teaching by the method of integrative approach and the nullification of the separations and artificial restrictions between its branches are required necessities, because language teaching to pupil through the sectional method may wrongly inspire to him that each language section is completely independent of other sections of such language. Eventually, this can generate incorrect understanding of language and its arrangement orders, in addition to the fact that it will not promote a balanced development in regard to the learner, in view of the possibility of lecturer's favouritism of a particular section of knowledge like reading or dictation or grammar at the expense of other sections. Likewise, sectionalism in language teaching is discouraged under this approach, as it doesn't prepare learner on how to effectively use language in different situations in view of the fact that it is fractional language learning (Ahmad 'Iyd 'Awd: 2000).

Nihaad Al-Musa (2003) asserted that it is not necessary for lecturer to dictate a poetical or prosodic portion or Quranic verses, in repetition, for the purpose of memorization in spite of the fact that the meaning is neither comprehended nor used to. It is not a good attitude in Language Teaching whereby lecturer is expected to dictate on his students, portion which is not envisaged by them. It is not a linguistic teaching attitude as well, the method where student is required to write an expression in truncation with imperfect meaning in beautiful handwriting..... This is because all such attitudes and the likes will restrict language to vocal expression or written symbol only, whereas language is never like that. Vocal is nothing except as an instrument and nothing is symbol except as a means; both are instruments and means in a connotative explanation or establishment of feeling or expression of a situation.

Also, Sa'eed Muhammad Muraad (2002) viewed that it is impossible for student to speak while still consulting dictionary first to be provided with vocabularies needed in that particular situation, then proceeds to consulting grammatical principles so as to understand how to operate and consult sentences, rather the expression is expected to be perfectly prompt, integrative and correlative.

Likewise, Ahmad Haykal (2010) held the view that teaching grammatical principles, rhetorical sciences, expressive critical studies, knowledge of literary periods, literary figures, literary arts, commentary of poetical and prosodic texts plus illustration of aesthetical and stylistic spots therein, are beneficial and desired altogether, but it cannot successfully teaches Arabic alone. It cannot also give opportunity to learner to have language competency, whatever effort he makes. With that language competency, learner is expectedly able to speak his language accurately or write it properly or read it correctly. Neither principles of syntax and morphology alone can facilitate

speaking skills of learner on his language nor any of rhetorical principles nor do expressive critical studies aid him on the writing skills of that language. Rather, the combination of these and those regulations and instruments only assist, facilitate, help and simplify, but can neither produce nor achieve excellent results. The only system which can produce and achieve good result is that linguistics competency that performs its function in a way that man cannot feel its effect, and which occurs- after its perfection for him like all other special abilities endowed to him.

Muhammad Salih Samak (1998) also observed that the ancient Arabic Scholars noticed the importance of the idea of integration among branches of language teaching to the growing youth through the literary texts selected as basic focus whereby various types of linguistic research would support. They would be adopted as explicative device for the vocabularies of text and explanation of their expressions. Also they served as illustration of whatever the text might contain like rhetorical forms, grammatical theorems, historical indications, geographical connections and the clarification of the possible merits and demerits...in addition to a report on the life of poet or writer or owner of text, whatever characteristics and impacts on language and literature he might acquire, as well as the extent of being influenced and influential plus citation of situations and occasions in which the text was composed. However, the author might digress, whereby the authenticity of his view may only be supported by the citation of other texts endorsing it, and the quoting of other texts that are identical with the treated text in terms of the subject matter..... If the text is a poem, the writer may treat the clarification of its meter and rhyme. Among the scholars who adopted the integrative approach in their writings were *Al-Jaahiz* in his book (*Al-Bayan wa At-Tabyiin*), *Al-Mubarrid* in his book (*Al-Kaamil*) and *Al-Qaali* in his book (*Al-'Amaali*).

Nihaad Musa (2003) stated that the application of this method in Arabic Language Teaching is not rooted from the modern scholars, but rather it was originated from the ancient Arabs whose language teaching method always relies on text which might be Quranic text, or poetical divan or collections of literary works or a number of various texts around which lexicography, morphology, syntax, rhetoric revolve. The book *Al-Kaamil* of *Al-Mubarrid* is mostly an obvious evident example of this method, because *Al-Mubarrid* had selected in his book, a large number of patterns from among selected poems, sermons, wisdoms, prophetic statements and narrated stories sufficiently. He used to conclude each text with necessary clarification required in terms of the meaning of the strange words, analytical parsing of the smooth spots and the discovering of the structural secrets and expression skills.

The integrative approach is one of the most important modern trends- although it has roots from the ancient Arabic Language Studies- as it depends, in Arabic Language Teaching, on literary texts accurately selected for actualization of the targeted purposes. On one hand, it is a good subject for reading and valid for teaching mode of expression in terms of its two sides; verbal and written. On the other hand, it is considered as an excellent sphere (field) for functional application of language, syntax and morphology, aside from being a fertile field for rhetorical and critical studies. Thus, this appropriate alternative approach of the Language Teaching Method serves as branches which is based on fragmentation and partitioning of language course to activities which are independent from each other. Each activity has its method, periods and recommended books, even each has its mode of evaluation, characterized with unclear functions and unrealized objectives (Haniyyah 'Areef and Labukh Bujmaleen 2015).

Haniyyah 'Areef and Labukh Bujmaleen (2015) stated that the basic function of teaching in life, is to consolidate

individual on adaptation with other individuals of the society in which he lives and to equip him with assisting means on that action. Absolutely, there is no doubt that the most important one among those means is the language through which communication is actualized.

Muhsin 'Ali 'Atiyyah (2008) also viewed that the basis of the functional trend in Arabic Language Teaching is its functioning feature in life and the fact that it is a means for effectiveness of communication among human beings for the purpose of transaction with various life affairs. As language is attached with this role, it is necessary to welcome the need of the individual to exploit it in the situations from which life is formed. The purpose of the functional teaching is manifested in the actualization of student language competency whereby he would be able to carry out accurate language exercise through its natural practical functions.

Al-Mursi Abu Laban (2014) wrote that language is a functional means of expression. Methods of communication are based on this direction as it mostly pays attention to the meaning and communication in language. It also provides secondary functions to the syntactical functions, as the language teaching relies on it based on meaning and communicational functions. Functional matter is considered one of the most important modern approaches in the teaching of National languages, as language is viewed as a social medium which is characterized with a social function. What prompts to that, is the awareness of the importance of effective language communication for the possible deliberation of the human affairs inside and outside of the community. This awareness grew during wars and in days of sufferance which humanity went through during the two world wars. Likewise, there were undeniable impacts on this trend towards pragmatism or philosophy of instrumentality. Thus, the major function of teaching in pragmatism is to consolidate individual to adapt

with the community in which he resides and to equip him with means or instruments which can aid him on that, and language with its four branches, serves as one of those means and instruments. All this produces an effect on school life to the extent the real communication has eventually becomes the essence of any program prepared for the teaching of language branches. Hence, language is not a mere memorization of group of words and sentences, or group of theories and principles. Rather, language learning- in addition to the above- is an effective use of language vocabularies, structures and principles in various social occasions.

Both Larsen and Freeman (1988) asserted that this trend refers to the functional theory of language teaching, it emphasizes on the training of students on language comprehension and inspires its application for the performance of certain functions in the natural situations.

Language practise is perfectly accomplished according to this trend in order to present some suggestions or to illustrate standpoint or for discrepancy or for perfection or to surrender for some matters, or for excuse of a human action. The essence of this trend collectivism in most of the language teaching programs which demonstrate communication theories. It is commonly known in the curriculums that the society in which learner lives is one of the most important fields from which the teaching objectives derive. Therefore, it is necessary that the objectives should pay attention to the capacitation and fortification of the learner on the accomplishment of the societal demands or the functions and necessities which the society demands. The meaning of this in relative to language expression, is that teaching should pay attention to fortification of pupils so as to accomplish all the branches of language activity which the society demands from them. Based on this, the functional trend in language expression learning indicates the exploitation of language in life situations which could

prompt us to written or verbal expression. Likewise, language communication is a manifestation of the applications of the functional trend in the field of methods of expression teaching, as the symptoms of choice of language communication approach has successfully surfaced in the English Language Teaching in Britain since the beginnings 70s of this century. That was after the studies and research had established the defects of the traditional methods like audio oral method and oral audio method in realizing the pursued goals.

THE CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MALANG - INDONESIA TOWARDS:

The researchers distributed the questionnaires for the lecturers of Arabic language in National University of Malang so as to be acquainted with their views towards the content of the Arabic language curriculum in the university. The questionnaire contained two questions which were answered by those lecturers, as follow:

- 1- The content of the Arabic language curriculum in National University of Malang - Indonesia suits the level of the students.

Chart Number 1

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	7	35%
To some extent	13	65%
Disagree	0	0%
Total Number	20	100%

It is clear from the above chart that 35% of the specimen viewed that the curriculum of the Arabic language teaching in National University of Malang suits the level of the students,

whereas 65% of them agreed that the content of the curriculum is in harmony with their level relatively. These research facts indicate that what is in the content of the curriculum is appropriate with the level of the majority of the students. However, the difference detected by the researchers from the responses of the specimen on the question might be traceable to the level of the students themselves, thus when the researchers visited that university and asked some of students about their experiences in Arabic language, he found that some of them had no background in Arabic language and they studied in the schools where Arabic is not taught. Moreover, they enrolled in this university at the department of Arabic Language because of their failure to be admitted in other universities or in other specializations. It is sensible that there is no curriculum that can perfectly suit all the students if they are on different levels; some of them are either progressive or intermediate while others are among the beginners.

- 2- The content of the curriculum of the Arabic language teaching at National University of Malang contains all the language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Chart Number 2

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	20	100%
To some extent	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Total Number	20	100%

It is clear from the above chart that 100% from among the specimen agreed that the content of the Arabic Language Curriculum in National University of Malang embodies all the language skills. Meanwhile, this means that the content is exhaustively comprehensive which is a very good development as the existence of the contents which consist of four skills like

listening, speaking, reading and writing enables the lecturers on the training of students on communication with Arabic language. However, there are many students who studied Arabic language for many years but still cannot master the communication with it because the content of the language curriculum only consists of the reading comprehension where it restrictively develops the ability of the students in reading without other language skills. Likewise, the research outcome of this work implies that the perspective of the lecturers of the Arabic Language in Indonesia has changed to what is better than when the curriculums of Arabic language were restricted to religious lessons only, while their teaching modes were based on training the students on understanding the lessons. Eventually, the curriculum contents are full of texts, conversations and exercises which prepare lecturer to equip his students on the skills of communication in Arabic.

CONCLUSION:

The content of the Arabic Language Curriculum in National University of Malang suits the level of the students to a great extent, except that there are some students, because of the low levels, could not fit in for the curriculum. The disparity might be traceable to the level of the students themselves, thus when the researchers visited the university concerned, and interrogated some of students on their experiences in Arabic language, he discovered that some of them have no background in Arabic language and they studied in schools where Arabic is not taught. Also, they enrolled in that university at the department of Arabic Language as a result of their failure to secure admission in other universities and for other specializations. It is also reasonable that there is no curriculum that can suit all the students if they are in various levels,

therefore some of them are either progressing or intermediating while others are among the beginners.

The content of the Arabic Language Curriculum in National University of Malang comprises of all language skills which is very much good as the existence of the contents which contain four language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing empowers the lecturers to successfully train the students on communication in Arabic language. There are many students who studied Arabic for many years but could not yet master the communication with it because the content of its curriculum is restricted to reading comprehension and it only develops the ability of the students on reading skill excluding other language skills. Likewise, the research finding shows that the perspective of the Arabic Language lecturers in National University of Malang has perfectly changed to the better than when the Arabic Language Curriculums were characteristically filled with religious lessons only and their teaching was equivalent to the equipment of the students with how to understand them. Meanwhile, the contents of the curriculum have currently become full of texts, conversations and drilling exercises through which lecturer can impart knowledge to students enable them acquire the communication skills with Arabic.

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