# THE TYPOLOGY OF ARABIC TEACHING INSTITUTIONS IN INDONESIA

Suja'i Suja'i,
UIN Walisongo- Semarang

Ahmad Maghfurin
UIN Walisongo- Semarang

Correspondence:
Ahmad_maghfurin@walisongo.ac.id

**Abstract:**
Arabic came into Indonesia along with the arrival of Islam. In that long period, Arabic has experienced ups and downs. The institutions that teach it also experience dynamic changes and developments. Such changes form a certain type that distinguishes between one another. This paper describes the typology of Arabic language teaching institutions in Indonesia in relation to their orientation and strategy based on research in several Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and colleges/universities in East Java, Central Java and West Java. The data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Qualitative data analysis was employed through inductive thinking patterns. The study found three types of Arabic language teaching institutions, namely: traditional, transitional, modern. All three types have different characteristics, orientations, strategies, and learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Arabic Teaching Institution, Orientation, Strategy.

## Introduction

Arabic is one of the subjects taught in various educational institutions in Indonesia. Both formal and non-formal Islamic education institutions such as Islamic Boarding Schools, Islamic Elementary Schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah), Formal Madrasas with various levels and Islamic Religious Universities have carried out Arabic learning with various models and forms.

Such institutions always make changes to improve the quality of their teaching-learning. Changes include the aspects of curriculum, learning, media, and others(Mohammad Hasan, 2015). Institutions where the teaching process takes place become one of the influential forms of environment for students' language development. The educational environment can mean a place to live, media, and also a strategy. In line with this, Burt, Dulay, and Krashen say that motivation can be instrumental and integrative(Acep Hermawan, 2011). Instrumental means that someone learns a language for beneficial reasons, such as getting a job; whereas integrative is someone learning languages in order to be able to interact with the people

who use the language. As an Indonesian who studied Arabic because he wanted to work in the Middle East.

Learning can be influenced by several factors, such as the form and system of education(Mustaqim, 2001). The form can be interpreted as the institution, and the system can be interpreted as a strategy and orientation. Good institutions can inspire their students, while the right strategies can lead students to achieve success. Rebecca Oxford argues that the use of the right strategies can generate intelligence and increase confidence. Strategy is an important tool to develop competencies and be able to make learning effective. Someone who has confidence will be more enthusiastic and has no burden in the learning process. For this reason, searching for the formats and learning strategies that have been proven success can be used as a model for the development of institutions that conduct teaching Arabic. The institution becomes an important environment for the success of students. School personnel, family members and the community provide assistance and support to the quality of their academic performance(MS. Farooq, 2011).

Environmental support is an external motivation when the internal spirit of learners always experiences fluctuations, sometimes rising sometimes falls. Changes in changes include environmental influences. Moreover, learning foreign languages is also influenced by the first language (first language), so that this foreign language learner misunderstands the work patterns of the second language(Pasty M. Lightbown and Nina Spada, 2011).

In a global society as what Richard called the virtual community, the lives of people separated by borders, but connected by the internet media, television and film, but often foreign to the language or the culture they consume. This meant that a foreign language is very important in today's era. People in this global era using the language to understand widely spread cultures through the media. Foreign languages, including Arabic, is the main attraction, so many educational institutions (madrasas / schools / *pesantren*) massively implement bilingual programs in the learning process. Favorite-labeled madrasas / schools are identical to the use of foreign languages in the process of knowledge transfer. Foreign languages (Arabic / English) have become people's needs.

**METHOD**

Arabic teaching institutions are now very varied. This articel focused on the types, orientations, and strategies of Arabic teaching institutions in Indonesia. The data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The data collected then analyzed through descriptive-qualitative by inductive thinking patterns(John W Creswell and J David Creswell, 2018).

Before determining the location of the study, the researcher first mapped the Arabic teaching institution based on the institution's orientation.

By looking at the background, researchers were able to find forms of institutions that have similarities,then take some of them into research sites representing other institutions that have similarities from the level, curriculum, background and / or status of the institution.

The non-probability-purposive sample of the institutions can provide information about the main problems and phenomena in the research by emphasizing the assumption that the institution is more capable at providing more comprehensive data and at the same time has a more distinctive style(John W Creswell, 2007). Qualitative analysis was used to find a conclusion related to the strategies and types of qualified Arabic teaching institution to become a model for teaching Arabic.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This study found three types of Arabic language teaching institutions developed in Indonesia, categorized into traditional, transitional and modern.

**Traditional Type**

The first type is traditional that the learning arabic is done through the learning Arabic religious materials. This method takes place in traditional Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia along with the sciences of languages, which is commonly referred to instrument science. The science includes S*haraf, Nahwu, and Balaghah*, which became compulsory curriculum in all *pesantren*. Memorizing the content words is also the duty of every *santri*.

The lesson in boarding schools uses Arabic textbooks known as the yellow book (Kitab Kuning). *Kitab Kuning* is the primary reference for pesantren students to learn about Islam. The books are usually taught by the *bandongan* system. A *kyai*/ teacher reads the book *lafzan wa ma'nan* (text and meaning), while the *santri* write down the vowel sound and the meaning given. In some Islamic boarding schools, *bandonga*n learning continued with discussions what the *Kyai* had taught so that the students would understand better of how the reading and the meaning of the books have been studied. Arabic learning held in Salaf boarding schools oriented as a means to understand the teachings of Islam. In harmony with this orientation, the method used is the grammar-translation. This Arabic learning yields only limited receptive reading skills, namely the ability to read certain books that have been studied along with deepening of the rules of the Arabic language.

Language learning in *traditional pesantren* is not oriented to the active communication skill using Arabic so that the teacher's attention only on the aspect of reading which is useful for understanding the yellow book. Teachers use most of the time learning and only occasionally allow students to ask or answer questions raised by the teacher. Almost all of the time used by the teacher to explain the lesson so that the relationship between the teacher and student becomes asymmetrical (not balanced).

There is almost no difference in the teaching-learning process, although it discusses different material. In learning *nahwu*, the dominance of the teacher looks so obvious in the class as he positions himself as the main source of knowledge (teacher centered). The teacher gives, while the student accepts. The teacher transfers knowledge, while students listen to the teacher's explanation while recording things that are considered important. The teacher explains thoroughly about the theme being studied, from the rules to the example, following the order of the books of *nahwu* used in the pesantren. The entire contents of the book are taught thoroughly from the first page to the last. The teacher uses the deductive method (qiya> si) to teach *qawaid*. This can be seen from the learning path that begins with the rules and then clarifies with the examples needed.

Similar conditions are also found in classes for other material. Learning activities are based on the reading of the texts but do not give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to interact with the texts themselves. The teacher spends more time reading texts, while students only listen, put punctuation marks on them, and memorize the way the text is read by the teacher. With such a flow of activities, the teacher is actually not teaching reading but teaches imitation of reading(Rahayu S. Hidayat, 1990).

Learning that takes place in these ways in a language learning view is considered inappropriate because it only makes students dependent on others and does not motivate them learning independently(Shalih Abd al Aziz and Abd al Aziz Abd al Hamid, no date). Inappropriate does not mean wrong, but it takes a longer time. Learning the language in the present definition is no longer fills material into the brains of students, but more than that is to make them learn independently. Independent learning is a process that allows students to rely on themselves continually to acquire their language knowledge and skills. Independence learning can be formed if students are given the opportunity to use their abilities. The main role of the teacher is to provide a conducive atmosphere for autonomy. Teachers do not always give but encourage students to develop their own skills. Teachers do not only show their abilities in front of students but train students to facilitate their skills(Mahmud Abd al Sayyid, 1988).

The applied classic method boarding schools/ pesantren is understandable because the main concern is not in the language of the text. The purpose of the learning process of this model is the content of religious material in the book. Thus, this method is appropriate for teaching religious material but less appropriate to teach language, not even fit for teaching reading skills. The target of reading is text, not mastery of its contents. Moreover, the experience of using the language learned is something very valuable in learning a foreign language. Trial and error is a good strategy in learning foreign languages, of course, followed by correction from the teacher. From that mistake, students know the right through teacher correction so that students do not repeat the same mistakes at other times.

The learning flow mentioned indicates that the *qawaid* and *tarjamah* methods dominate the teaching-learning process in *pesantren*. This method is partly chosen because the aim is to study the contents of the text. Although the teaching-learning process rests on reading the text, what actually happens is not the process of learning to read the text, but learning the content of the text. Thus, learning in *pesantren* is actually not appropriate to teach Arabic. But *santri* learns Arabic naturally through these books because they are used to and take quite a long time. Another advantage of *pesantren* is the obligation to memorize *tashrifs* and *matan* books of *nahwu*. The memorization of the *santri* made it easier for them to recall the required method when reading the yellow book.

The learning model took place in *Salaf pesantren* like this in the past proved to produce *kyai* who mastered various fields of Islamic knowledge and Arabic grammar. The success was supported among others by a factor where the *santri* at that time is just studying religious sciences. His attention was not branched out to think of other disciplines. Thus they have enough time to learn Arabic through these books.

While in past time *santri* used all their time in Islamic boarding schools to study religion, new developments in the pesantren world took place when the government began developing school institutions as a mainstream national education system. Various new professions are widely open to citizens who have this education. The youth are more interested in schools that directly affect the declining interest in studying religion in traditional *pesantren*. In the 50s and 60s, many small *pesantren* were closed due to lack of *santri*. While the large Islamic boarding schools began to include general subjects or even set up madrasas / schools in order to survive, in addition, there are face-to last in its original form(Zamakhsyari Dhofier, 1994).

Thus, the time to learn yellow book is decreasing than those Islamic boarding schools in the past times. This same needs to Arabic and the diminishing time allocation is what makes many Islamic boarding schools look for strategies that enable mastery of the Arabic language can be done faster.

## Transitional Type

Called as transitional because such institutions included in this type have Arabic language curriculum based on modern trends in foreign language learning. However, in practice, these institutions face some constraint which makes Arabic language learning done in a traditional way. This type can be found in most schools/ madrasas and non-Arabic majoring of Islamic colleges. Despite the fact that Arabic is a tool to study Islamic sciences, but in fact, the role is not enabled. As evidence, Arabic is not used as a reference language or as the instructional language. In such conditions, Arabic is only taught as a complementary lesson parallel to other lessons at school or college according to their specifications.
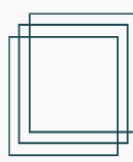
This status equation between madrasa and public school places madrasas in dilemmatic situations, especially in addressing the diversity of student input. The diversity of students' origins also means the diversity of their initial abilities in the field of Arabic. This is because Arabic is generally only taught in madrassas under the Ministry of Religion. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education and Culture does not make Arabic a compulsory subject in schools. Arabic is only a subject of local content in some schools that carry the name Islam.

Although the madrasa curriculum mandates Arabic as a sustainable subject from elementary to high level, but in fact, the madrasa accepts students regardless of the type of school at the previous level. The origin of the student's school does not really describe the initial abilities of students in the field of Arabic. The best way to get accurate information about this is definitely by conducting a preliminary assessment to ensure the level where new students will attend Arabic lessons. From the preliminary assessment, the gap will be known (lacks), namely the gap between what should be mastered  by what has actually been mastered  by new students in terms of Arabic will be studied(I.S.P Nation & Macalister, 2010).

A fact in the field is inevitable that not all MA students are MTs graduates. Similarly, not all students from MTs are graduates of MI. This fact certainly interferes the sustainability process of learning the Arabic language that the madrasa curriculum requires. However, this harsh reality that must be swallowed by most Madrasah Aliyah schools as a result of its status similarity to high school (SMA). Accepting junior high school graduates means getting non-linear input that has an entry behavior below the line on certain subjects. Refusing junior high school graduates is also bitter because of a shortage of new students desired.

No matter how bitter, MA has to choose one. The choice is to accept junior high school graduates with all their shortcomings. This, of course, deviates from the sustainability properties owned Arabic in Madrasahs. But this deviation must not divert the flow of Arabic learning from the curriculum line. Life is to choose, and every choice has its own consequences. People who have chosen must be responsible and accept the consequences of their choices. Any deviation in the field should be addressed specifically within the curriculum corridor. Deviations that are addressed with undue references will only lead to subsequent irregularities that can actually damage the neatly arranged system. The destruction system will only alienate the process from the intended-planned objectives.

As a consequence of receiving junior high school graduates as students of Aliyah Madrasah is provide provision to them to have abilities that are relatively proportionate with MTs graduates in terms of sustainable subjects that are not taught in junior high school. Among these subjects is Arabic. With these special briefing, they are expected to have sufficient readiness to take part in Arabic learning at this level. This method is not taken by almost all madrassas.
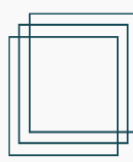
Even though the neglect of the student's previous education means the omission of students learning without the entry behavior required by certain subjects. This is a difficult process, not to say impossible, to achieve the expected results.

The entry behavior problem of Arabic language learning in madrasas is classic. The problems recur every year until they become routine. Madrasas are familiar with this problem, but still, let it does not get any solution. As a result, Arabic lessons are a scourge for most madrasa students. Arabic, which should be easily learned by Indonesians, but the reality, it becomes difficult even harder than English. There are many supporting factors for the ease of Arabic for Indonesian Muslims, but in fact, these factors do not function in learning Arabic in Madrasas.

From the observations made in class and interviews with Arabic language teachers, it can be seen how hard and difficult the process of teaching and learning Arabic in the MA both for the students and the teachers. One source of the problems is the unpreparedness of students to take the lesson at the level of Islamic Senior High School (MA). Indeed, there is no guarantee that MTs graduate students are better than those from Junior High School (SMP), but at least MI and MTs graduate students who then continue to the MA level, have fulfilled the sustainability in learning Arabic. This clause is as a prerequisite that MA students are the graduations that have the same ability as MI and MTs graduations all at once. If these conditions are not fulfilled, they will have difficulties to follow this lesson. Taking the math analogies that number 17 can only be understood by children who have learned number 1 and number 7. Without knowing these two numbers, children will not be able to recognize number 17. Similarly, it is applied in Arabic lessons that there are many language materials as a prerequisite. There is an accumulation of the previous exercises in their language skills, too.

 The dominant method of the *qawa> id* and *tarjamah* in learning Arabic at the Madrasa is the effect of insufficient entry behavior input. It does not require active students' involvement in the learning process, and it still continuing regardless of the students understanding of what is being taught to them. Of course it is not appropriate with teaching foreign languages method , especially in the aspect of speaking skills that require active participation. Learning speaking skills that take place by the way the teacher reads the text of the *hiwar* and translates it, is certainly not in accordance with the objectives to be achieved. The purpose of learning to speak in a foreign language is actually to train students to express their feeling and ideas verbally in the target language. They need opportunities to use the language provisions they have learned to express their ideas of the theme being discussed. Thus the teacher should not dominate most of the time to speak and explain the *hiwar* text. The method of learning Arabic that tends to spoil students is one of the contributing factors to make their Arabic language skills not increase from the Ibtidaiyah level, even though they are in fact already at the level of the madrasah Aliyah.
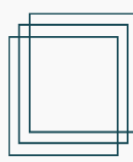
Most *madrasah aliyah* students are actually still at the level of ibtididyah / elementary even though they are formally at the aliyah / advanced level. Their reading ability is merely to matching sounds with written letters. This is the lowest level of mechanistic reading. Whereas the actual reading is to see and understand the writing text by expressing it or only in the heart. Thus, being able to correctly pronounce the text without understanding the meaning is actually not reading skill yet.

**Modern Type**

Institutions that carry out the Arabic learning process with this type should make careful planning, and sufficient time allocation such as those in Arabic majors at universities, as well as other institutions that give special attention to learning Arabic. Many Islamic boarding schools also take this method to teach Arabic to their students, both for all and the selected students. Nurul Jadid-Paiton Islamic Boarding School, for example, established a language center to handle the students who have more desire to explore Arabic language. While others learn Arabic in the formal classes in traditional ways through the teaching-learning of the *Kitab Kuning* as practiced in other *salaf pesantren*.

This step was taken because the students of Nurul Jadid are indeed not only directed to become religious scholars. Many of them chose the majors that do not directly deal with the Arabic language which is offered in schools, madrasas, and universities under the auspices of this *pesantren*. However, it provides specialized services for intensive Arabic learning to students who are interested in depth.

On the other hand, Pesantren Dalwa-Pasuruan chose to provide intensive Arabic lessons to new students for 6 months. All of them at this time only studied Arabic intensively which would be passed on naturally through the teaching of the *Kitab Kuning* during their stay in this *pesantren*. Substantially, the material of the Dalwa Islamic boarding school is not different from other pesantren. However, this pesantren also provides provisions in advance to *santri* with the ability to speak Arabic actively or passively. With this provision, religious learning can be done more quickly because the *Kyai (s)* do not need to give meaning to each word, while the *santri* are also not preoccupied with affixing punctuation and the meaning of the text being studied.

Six months is considered sufficient time to equip students with the basic Arabic ability. After that, they learn Kitab Kuning as in other *pesantren* so that their Arabic language proficiency is expected to develop naturally. To increase their understanding of the Arabic, they are still given science material according to its level from *jurumiyyah* to *syariah alfiyah*. The books taught in Dalwa pesantren are also relatively similar to those in other *pesantren*, but there is a difference in the teaching method in which the *Kyai (s)* simply read the text of the book with the same intonation as reading in their own language, then explain directly in Arabic and sometime in Indonesia, of course if the *Kyai* is an Indonesian. But if the *Kyai* is an Arab, then surely the whole teaching process is in Arabic as well. In this way, *santri* are trained to understand the book
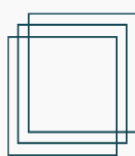
directly so they do not depend on the teacher's translation into the local language which is commonly referred to *makna gundul*.

It is slighty different from those two *pesantren*, *Pondok Modern Gontor* does not choose to teach Arabic along with other lessons. It is contrast to *Pondok salaf* that *Pondok Modern Gontor* teaches Arabic integratively that covers a variety of skills at once. This approach, in which there are two models according to their scopes, is also selected by institutions to teach Arabic intensively.

The *first* is internal integrative model that all elements and internal components of Arabic language are taught with interdependently. The second is external integrative model. This model is broader in scope than in the first integrative model. This external integrative is done by making Arabic the language of learning religious materials, both as a reference language and as an instruction in the learning process. This way learning has two targets at once, direct and indirect ones. The direct target is the explicite target to be achieved through the learning process, that is religious knowledge. While the indirect target is the Arabic language ability which is automatically developed through the reference language and the learning process. In this way the students get more opportunities to learn Arabic. Learning Arabic is not only given in Arabic classes, but also in class with all subjects.

Orientation and integrative learning strategies can also be found in UIN Malang through specific institutions to handle this task, namely PKPBA. Even though the main institution is not *a pesantren*, PKPBA is also adopted a boarding system as implemented by *pesantren*. This dormitory system was chosen by the leader of the institution with the awareness that this method was needed to form a conducive environment for students' language development. Without a dormitory system, it is difficult to establish a condusive language environment, considering that the University is not only for specifically Islamic studies, but also for other diverse departments.

Ma'had Abdurahman bin Auf-Malang is the other example in which the campus is fulfilled with the formation to establish a language environment. Although this institution is named boarding school (*ma'had),* the conditions are not as generally the same as other *ma'had* in Indonesia, namely Islamic boarding schools where all students live in a dormitory complex with Kyai and religious teachers. Nevertheless, this *ma'had* still remains to idealize Islamic dormitory in which it is indeed very important to form the Arabic language environment for the students. Before establishing the dormitory, *ma'had* optimize the campus as a conducive environment for the growth of the Arabic language for students, both inside and outside of the classroom. In the classroom, *Ma'had* uses all Arabic textbooks as well to strive that Arabic can be used as the language of instruction. For this purpose, *Ustadz* (s) who have Arabic-language tertiary educational backgrounds, both directly in Arab countries and in branch campuses in Indonesia, such as LIPIA Jakarta are chosen

*Ma'had* also applies Arabic as an administrative language and announcements on campus outside of the classroom. It can be seen that all the administrative files and announcements posted on the campus environment are in Arabic. These methods are taken to train students to be familiar with the using of Arabic, at least in their activities on campus *ma'had*. Habituation is the most effective way of language acquisition, regardless of the age of the intended students.

**Conclusion**

The three types of Arabic language teaching institutions, in addition to having their own characteristics, orientations, and strategies respectively, they also produce three different models of ability. The implementation of modern Arabic teaching generally succeeded in delivering graduate students to master Arabic to communicate both verbally and in writing. Teaching Arabic with traditional approaches to be developed in Islamic boarding schools generally can only lead students to master Arabic passively, such as to understand some standard books learned in Islamic boarding schools, but they still have difficulty in communicating with others both orally and in writing. In fact, they generally have weaknesses in reading and understanding other books that have not been studied. Of course, it is not in line with the purpose of learning Arabic, which has primary goals as a communication tool. However, this condition is understandable because the main purpose of teaching in Islamic boarding schools is the mastery of religious knowledge in which the content of the yellow books is taught as the goal.

Whereas the transitional type of Arabic teaching, which makes it as a complement to other subject areas, it is generally far from the expectation. Therefore, the teaching and learning process with this approach often produces the unsatisfactory output . As a result, after they graduated from the education they took, their abilities are not reliable. This fact does not only occur at the level of the *madrasa* but also at the level of Islamic higher education.

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