Arabic Learning for Military Purposes in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

In this era, foreign language skills are needed in various fields. Including Arabic in the military. From this issue, Arabic language learning is conducted by military soldiers. This study attempts to investigate the implementation of Arabic language learning for military soldiers and the achievement of their proficiency. The study was conducted using qualitative field research. The primary data was obtained from curriculum documents and interviews with teaching staff and authorities. In addition, secondary data was obtained from the results of relevant literature studies. The sampling technique is purposive sampling. The results of this study show that the implementation of Arabic learning elaborated on the military curriculum. The achievement of Arabic language proficiency for military soldiers is quite significant and motivating.

Keywords: *Arabic for special purposes, Arabic learning, Arabic learning for military.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The approach to conflict resolution is also through communication, of course, with language and culture. Mastering the Arabic language is believed to make it easier for some people to participate in creating world peace, especially military soldiers. By mastering foreign languages, especially Arabic, international communication can also be well established (Hamidah, 2019; Lachkar, 2022).

Given the importance of mastering Arabic for military and other purposes, it is not surprising that many educational institutions are currently conducting Arabic language courses (Ghani, Daud, & Ramli, 2019). The public's interest in Arabic has made the language one of the local content subjects in several elementary and secondary schools. Apart from being taught in primary and secondary schools, Arabic is currently taught in several universities (Warnis, Triana, Kustati, Remiswal, & Nelmawarni 2019). As is known, the practice of learning Arabic in universities is not a new thing, both for public universities and Islamic universities. This is as revealed by Garancang (2010) that mastery of Arabic is essential. Islamic educational institutions also make Arabic one of the main fields of study.

Nisa, and Arifin (2020) explained that Arabic learning in Indonesia is currently carried out with certain goals, both educational and non-educational, which include academic, work, and religious goals. Another phenomenon that has received less attention is the implementation of Arabic learning carried out by TNI (Indonesian Army, herein after will be called as TNI) soldiers. Warnis, Triana, Kustati, Remiswal, and Nelmawarni (2019) stated that the teaching and learning process may differ from learning Arabic at other institutions or universities.

Furthermore, the implementation of Arabic learning for the military also does not deny the meaning of education, only in a more specific context and realm. As explained earlier, in communication and international relations, soldiers need a second language, for example, Arabic. However, learning Arabic here cannot be generalized to other people. This is related to the field they are studying (Ghani, Daud, & Ramli, 2019). The above conditions indicate motivating factors to learn Arabic as a foreign language with particular needs. Trace, Hudson, and Brown (2015, p. 7) see that "language for a specific purpose (LSP) combines Linguistic knowledge and context-specific content areas based on learner needs. Language-for-purpose (LSP) combines linguistic knowledge and context-specific content areas based on learner needs".

Long before that, Strevens (1977, in Trace, Hudson, & Brown, 2015, p. 20) described the essential characteristics of language learning for specific purposes is "an important characteristic of special purpose

teaching is that: it consists of teaching which is: designed to meet the needs of certain of the students; related in content (that is, in its themes and topics) to specific disciplines, occupations, and activities; centered on language appropriate to activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc.".

Essential characteristics of special purpose instruction are in the content (that is, in its themes and topics) for specific disciplines, occupations, and activities, which centered on language appropriate to activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, and others.

In addition, different language environmental factors will affect its characteristics. Fauzan (2011) explains that language learning in foreign language acquisition has external motives, which can be cultural, social, economic, or political. The new learning environment is obtained by students in a short time and listening to teachers who are not native speakers (Hansen & Broekhuizen, 2021). Likewise, with different approaches, methods, and learning materials. Although there are differences in learning Arabic specifically for the military, this learning should receive attention from Arabic language scientists in all its aspects. Students who are not native Arabic speakers participate in a series of certain learning activities within a specified time to achieve their learning goals (Lafi, 2015).

One of the learning objectives is to practice Arabic, both spoken and written. The urgency of learning language skills is explained by Syafei (2011) as every skill is closely related to the processes that underlie language. A person's language reflects his thoughts, and the more skilled a person speaks, the clearer and clearer the way. Therefore, developing language skills can mean developing thinking skills, and these skills can only be acquired and mastered by practicing and practicing (Syafei, 2011).

This fact becomes interesting when examining Arabic military learning, which has narrower access to learning, shorter time, and more diverse backgrounds in the military environment. One thing that is at the core of learning military Arabic is the existence of specific learning objectives. Madkur and Huraidi also said (2006) that the specific objectives of learning Arabic are related to politics, economy, tourism, and other fields of work related to their own goals.

In connection with the above view which states that learning Arabic for this particular purpose has synergy between the objectives related to the scope associated with it, therefore, its implementation will be based on the specific objectives themselves, namely teachers or teachers, students, textbooks, learning media, and learning methods. The implementation of learning will roll following certain learning objectives. This learning has characteristics but has similarities with language

practice (Nurmala, 2018). It is undeniable that the military environment also affects the learning conditions that are formed and the motivation to learn. Either from individual soldiers or the organizers of learning military institutions. In this case, motivation is mentioned in the motivation or drive that makes a person behave in a certain way.

Bartelson and Steiner define motivation as a state in a person that encourages, activates, or moves and directs or channels behavior toward goals (Koontz, 2001). If explained in this particular military study, the learning motivation of the soldiers tends to be external. This external motivation was caused by all soldiers taking lessons based on warrants and appointments from each unit, aiming for the soldiers to be equipped with Arabic language skills.

Learning Arabic is not only limited to the scope of education. However, learning Arabic exists in various fields. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study of Arabic military learning in Indonesia, which is new news for activists of Arabic learning studies. To deepen the study, this research analyzed about how is the implementation of Arabic language learning for TNI soldiers in Indonesia? And how is the acquisition of Arabic language proficiency for TNI soldiers in Indonesia?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

International relations and relations have now put the Arabic language back in its important and resurgent position. Arabic learning is carried out in various fields with specific objectives. In addition, special-purpose Arabic learning is part of a modern trend in the field of foreign language teaching (Ahmed, 2015; Hamidah 2019; Versteegh, 2015). Elsheikh (2004, p. 7) provides a view of learning Arabic with specific objectives "the teaching of Arabic for specific and functional purposes means that a program for certain categories of learners who require a certain number of languages, which can be used in business dealings, is also the language of programs whose content is academic or scientific or technical, or professional".

The modern trend in special-purpose Arabic learning goes hand in hand with the task of military soldiers in creating and maintaining peace in several Arab countries. The importance of using Arabic during this task is unavoidable. Military institutions must prepare language education for military soldiers who will carry out missions (Abd Razak, Mohamed, Jamsari, & Ahmad. 2015; Kovari, Ganji, & Tahmasebi 2020).

3. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method since the researcher focuses on the

experience or process of military soldiers during Arabic learning and the achievements obtained from these activities in Arabic language proficiency. This design aims to understand the meaning and essence of learning Arabic for specific military purposes at Education Center of Military and General Knowledge of Indonesian Army (Pusdik Pengmilum Kodiklatad, hence Kodiklatad) with purposive technique sampling. Data sources were obtained from military students, military teachers, and the Asian language department staff. The data collection techniques were carried out through interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentation studies. Data analysis is induction/qualitative.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In learning Arabic for military purposes, various phenomena are presented because all students are soldiers from various units spread throughout Indonesia. Furthermore, Arabic language learning is still applied by integrating the military curriculum into the learning to achieve the desired learning outcomes. Military soldier students gain significant and satisfying proficiency in Arabic.

4.1. Implementation of Military Special Purpose Arabic Learning in Indonesia

Implementing the Arabic learning for military purposes is based on the curriculum combined with the military curriculum. The primary interaction of learning in the classroom will not be separated from two essential things: teachers, students, and influential textbooks.

4.1.1. Military Curriculum of Arabic Learning for Military Purpose in Indonesia

In order to combine the curriculum as mentioned above, the participants gave presentations related to the curriculum. There were 13 participants from the Education Unit, the Education Operational Unit, the Language Department, and five military teachers. The Education Unit explained the curriculum based on the Indonesian Military Curriculum. At the same time, the Education Operational Unit discusses two essential things: the curriculum available from the TNI AD Kodiklat by adjusting the needs of each education. The military curriculum to regulate each type of education and for learning Arabic is carried out accordingly. Since the learning outcomes are being able to communicate simply in Arabic, this differs from the content of other military education materials. While the results of the compilation of answers from military teachers are the Kodiklat TNI AD Curriculum by combining the Arabic language learning curriculum, the essence of each language is to use it orally and in writing.

The Kodiklat TNI AD determines the curriculum, which collaborates with each Lemdikpus (Education Center) in providing education and experienced teachers in their fields. Meanwhile, for Pusdik Pengmilum, the Arabic language curriculum is regulated under the direction of the Kodiklatad by involving teachers with Arabic language skills. The Kodiklatad will then approve the curriculum that has been produced to be implemented immediately.

The various directions of the Kodiklat TNI AD are exposed in the military curriculum, making it easier for educational elements to achieve the goals of the curriculum itself (Meij & Merx, 2018). In this curriculum, it has also been determined the teaching materials that will be served to students. Respondents explained,

> "The curriculum is an Arabic military curriculum, consisting of Attitude and Behavior Development Subject, Arabic Knowledge and Skills Development Subject, and Military Physical Development Subject. All of these educational activities are packaged in 600 lesson hours and were held in 12 weeks with a dormitory system"

(J. Santoso, personal communication, March 11, 2022).

The third subject above suggests that there is a form of education described by Yilmaz (2011) that cognitive learning in the form of the subject of Arabic Knowledge and Skills Development; Psychomotor learning in the form of Military Physical Development Subjects; and effective learning in the form of Attitude and Behavior Development Subjects. Furthermore, with the learning planning and curriculum based on the directives of the Indonesian Army Kodiklat, it can be achieved that the learning stage is carried out in Arabic language learning for specific purposes (Madkur & Huraidi, 2006).

Furthermore, two points can be reached regarding learning Arabic for specific purposes. First is the particular curriculum, namely the military curriculum. This military curriculum will direct and limit the realm of language learning. Second, the implementation of learning outside the Arabic-speaking country, such as in Arabic, a mother tongue, is made for learners and a foreign language for them (Fauzan, 2011).

4.1.2. Main Components of Arabic Learning for Military Purpose in Indonesia

Several components are taking roles in Arabic learning for military purposes in Indonesia. First is the teachers involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages which is justified by the following interview passage:

> "Before learning begins, we have determined the goals and achievements in learning Arabic. Furthermore, these goals are applied in teaching and learning activities. In order to

know the level of success, it is necessary to evaluate the Arabic language learning itself".

AF, personal communication, March 12th, 2022

In addition, the teacher also acts as a source of knowledge, demonstrator, motivator, and learning manager. Furthermore, respondents mentioned also that teachers always teach and instill character during teaching and learning activities.

Arabic military teachers at Pusdik Pengmilum Kodiklatad (Education Center of Military and General Knowledge of Indonesian Army) have qualified competencies in providing the learning process. The teacher, as a source of knowledge, conveys the material. The teacher always conveys the learning objectives at the beginning of the meeting. Furthermore, the material is delivered well and can be understood by students. As a demonstrator, the teacher provides facilities such as media, for example, video media, to help students in the learning process; as motivators, teachers motivate students. The motivation given by the teacher also varies, one of which is regarding the role of foreign languages, especially Arabic, in international relations and supporting the task of peacekeepers. As a learning manager, teachers manage the learning process so it can be directed according to the essential competencies and learning objectives that must be achieved (Sabaniah, Ramdhan, & Rohmah, 2021).

The second components are the students. Military students followed the learning process during the Arabic language learning activities well, which is justified by the following interview passages:

"We attended Arabic language education initially based on a warrant. Then we followed suit and loved it. Learning conduct in the classroom and enrichment outside the classroom because we live in military barracks."

"We like Arabic lessons, which consist of various skills. After the lesson end, we always repeat it outside the classroom in enrichment activities. Not only that, but we also participate in linguistic activities, namely language day".

F, personal communication, March 12th, 2022

"The students follow the whole series of learning well by the instructions. They are also active in discussions and answer questions."

MA, personal communication, March 12th, 2022

Learning Arabic is a subject that students like. Arabic consists of several skills. Students are actively involved by engaging in discussions, answering questions, and organizing language day events with other foreign education majors. They are also involved in Arabic activities. In this case, internal motivation, namely enjoying learning, supports the learning process (Subagia & Wiratma 2020). As seekers of knowledge, students

actively participate in learning. They also follow all the military teacher's instructions inside and outside the classroom and the enrichment process.

Third, teaching materials. In learning, the teachers used the Arabiya Baina Yadaik book, which presents all language skills and provides audio material to support learning Maharaj istima' or listening skills. For students, this book can be easily understood and studied independently outside the classroom. Learning Arabic has been supported by appropriate teaching materials. (Magdalena et al., 2020)

4.2. Arabic Language Proficiency Acquisition for Student Soldiers in Arabic Learning for Military Purpose in Indonesia

Language learning is inseparable from acquiring language skills and learning Arabic at the Pusdik Pengmilum Kodiklatad. The most influential component of which is teaching materials. The military teacher explained,

"The teaching material used in learning Arabic is the book Arabiyah Baina Yadaik. This book provides complete language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, step by step".

AF, personal communication, March 12th, 2022

The complete proficiency material in the book *Arabiyah Baina Yadaik* will encourage these military students to acquire Arabic. Each skill is taught in stages, from small elements to complex ones.

Figure 1 Arabic Listening Skill Learning by Arabiya Baina Yadaik (Abdurrahman, Mukhtar, and Muhamad. 2014, p. 2-7).

Reading skill learning (as seen in Figure 3) presents various symbols of Arabic sounds in the form of themed vocabulary that students must read. Each sound symbol has its peculiarity in its reading. Then, students also distinguish the meaning or meaning of each reading. In this skill learning, students gain knowledge of images of sound symbols in a series of words and how to read them and distinguish each sound (Erlina, 2018).

Arabic has a distinctive letter symbol and how it is written. The Arabic book Baina Yadaik presents it in stages, letter by letter (see Figure 4). The peculiarity of writing Arabic starts from right to left. In addition, there are also complex rules in the pattern of placing letters at the beginning, middle, and end. All of this is presented in the selected textbooks. Military students also got the skills to write Arabic letters and symbols and write them in various vocabularies (Noeri & Junaedi, 2021).

The process of acquiring language skills has been supported in the Arabic book Baina Yadaik which provides complete and interrelated skills. It is undeniable that as a foreign language, teaching Arabic has its challenges. However, based on the achievement of the final grades, these military students have gotten good grades and significant proficiency in the implementation time of 600 hours of lessons. This achievement cannot be denied from the learning process carried out in the barracks and their military motivation.

Figure 2 Arabic Speaking Skill Learning by Arabiya Baina Yadaik Abdurrahman, Mukhtar, and Muhamad. 2014, p.17).

In listening skills learning as seen in Figure 1, presentation begins with the habit of listening to conversations. After that, it is interspersed with the recitation of various new vocabularies so that military students slowly understand the contents of the conversation. Students are also allowed to follow each part of the conversation. This encourages students to practice directly and gain experience from listening to conversations and distinguishing each distinctive sound of Arabic (Mufidah et al., 2019; Wahida, 2021).

Speaking skill learning as seen in Figure 2 is presented with various pictures and related vocabulary. Students are given examples with simple sentences. Then the available vocabulary is developed into sentences. Military students have the opportunity to practice according to their work. The exercises carried out repeatedly lead to acquiring the ability to speak Arabic (Sutaman & Febriani, 2021).
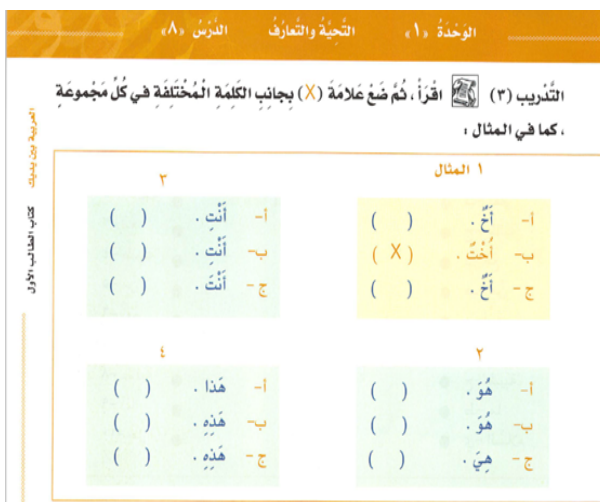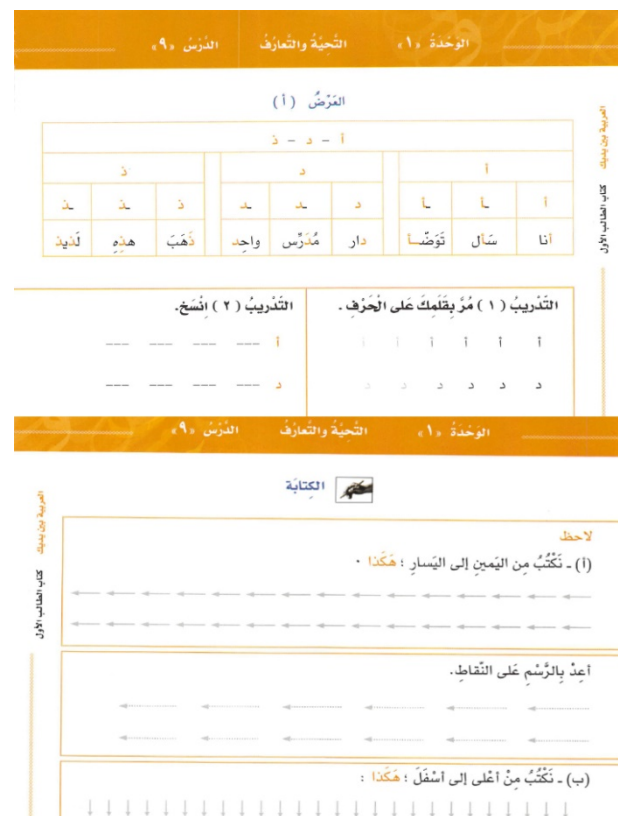

Figure 3. Arabic Reading Skill Learning by Arabiya Baina Yadaik (Abdurrahman, Mukhtar, and Muhamad. 2014, p.20).

Figure 4 Arabic Writing Skill Learning by Arabiya baina yadaik (Abdurrahman, Mukhtar, and Muhamad. 2014, p. 23-24)

5. CONCLUSION

The demands of the times require mastery of the Arabic language, especially for those carrying out the task of maintaining peace in various Arab countries. Indonesia as a member of the world association, cannot be separated from this task. Learning Arabic has been implemented for military soldiers in the Middle East. Learning based on a curriculum that has sbeen combined with language proficiency. This implementation is mandatory in military barracks for 12 weeks in 600 hours of lessons. As for the acquisition of skills, these military students obtained them completely during their learning. Learning outcomes are also significant with a strong military drive in them.

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