THE ROLE OF ARABIC ABILITY TO THE UNDERSTANDING IN LEARNING PROCESS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CLASS PROGRAM OF ISLAMIC RELIGION FACULTY MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/ 2018

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On Thursday, November 28, 2018

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Herewith, I declare that in this publication article, there is no such thing as plagiarism of previous literary work which has been raised to obtain bachelor degree, nor there are opinions or masterpieces which have been written or published by others, except those which are referred in the manuscript and mentioned in the literary review and bibliography. Therefore, if it is proved that there are some untrue statements in this declaration, I will hold full responsibility.

Surakarta, November 28, 2018

The Researcher

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Abstrak

Program kelas Internasional merupakan program kuliah yang didesain khusus menggunakan bahasa asing sebagai bahasa pengantar dalam proses pembelajaran, khususnya Bahasa Arab. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui peran kemampuan berbahasa arab terhadap pemahaman mahasiswa dalam proses pembelajaran, serta untuk mengetahui kendala progdi dalam meningkatkan kualitas program kelas internasional. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan. Penelitian ini bersifat deskriptif kualitatif, dengan metode pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian ini adalah pertama, bahasa asing merupakan bahasa utama yang digunakan dalam proses pembelajaran, khususnya bahasa arab bagi program studi pendidikan agama islam kelas internasional. Maka, kemampuan bahasa arab mahasiswa sangat berperan dalam proses pembelajaran. Kedua, kendala program studi saat ini adalah pada pengembangan dua bahasa asing, sedangkan tidak semua mahasiswa kelas internasional memiliki kemampuan berbahasa asing, terutama bahasa arab, serta kurangnya sumber daya pengajar bagi kelas internasional.

Kata kunci: peran, kemampuan bahasa arab, proses pembelajaran kelas internasional

Abstract

The international class program is a lecture program that is specifically designed to use foreign language as an introduction in the learning process, especially Arabic. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of Arabic language skills in understanding students in the learning process, as well as to find out the constraints of study programs in improving the quality of international class programs. This research is a field research. This research is qualitative descriptive, with data collection methods through observation, interviews, and documentation. The result of this study are first, foreign languages are the main language used in the learning process, especially Arabic for the international class of Islamic religious education study program. Thus, the Arabic language ability of students is very instrumental in the learning process. Secondly, the constraints of the current study program are the development of two foreign languages, whereas not all international class students have the ability to speak foreign language, especially Arabic, and the lack of teaching resources in international class Islamic education study programs.

Keywords: Role, Arabic ability/skill, learning process at international class program
1. **INTRODUCTION**

International program is the course which specially designed by using foreign language as an introduction in the learning process. There is no special curriculum in this program (*international class program*), the used curriculum remains the same as regular class programs. There is no significant difference between the two, but the language of instruction used in the learning process and daily life is quite different. The foreign language in exam question are in Arabic and English. The faculty of Islamic studies one of the faculties that provides international class programs. But only one is registered in this international class program, that is *Tarbiyah* international class program. There is no special placement test to be a student of this international class program except the mastery of two foreign languages, English and especially in Arabic.

There are two lecturing models in the international class program. The first model is applied in the teacher’s faculty and the educational sciences (FKIP) with the aim to prepare qualified students as a teacher in international standard schools. The second model is applied in the general faculty (other than FKIP), with a view to strengthening the competence of graduate candidates with foreign language skills, either English or Arabic.

Refers to the purpose of the establishment of an international class program, Tarbiyah is included in the first category, namely to prepare qualified graduates as teachers in international standard schools, it is challenge for Islamic religious education program to make its graduate candidates in accordance with the quality standards and objectives of the international class program.

*Tarbiyah* international class was first opened in 2014. As described earlier, a foreign language is a language that must be used as a language of instruction in the learning process. Automatically the students of this program are required to master the foreign language, at least they can speak a foreign language. The total number of *Tarbiyah* international class program till now reaches approximately 61 students, with different school backgrounds, among them came from *pesantren, madrasah*
Aliyah, and general high school. It is affects the level of mastery the Arabic language among students of Islamic religious education programs of international class program.

Ability to master the Arabic language is one of the mandatory requirements that must be met by Tarbiyah students of international class program. Because in the learning process, the preferred language of instruction is Arabic. But in fact, not all Tarbiyah students of international class programs master Arabic. So that the study program of Islamic religion, especially the international class program has not been able to highlight specific advantages until now.

According to Azhar Arsyad, people who master Arabic will be very easy to teach all branches of religious knowledge. Conversely, the college graduates whose Arabic language skills are very minimal will not be effective in performing their duties as teachers of religious sciences, because “those who have nothing can give nothing”.

From the description above, the researcher is interested to examine more deeply about the Arabic language skills of the student of international class program. This research is carried out as a form of effort in understanding the actual condition, as an evaluation material for the improvement of the international class program in the next academic year. As an effort to realize the standard of Arabic language competence for the student of international class program. This research is prepared by the title: “The Role of Arabic ability to the understanding in learning process at the international class program of Islamic religion education faculty Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta academic year 2017/2018”.

As in the background description above, authors interested in conducting research with some formulation of the problems, that are first, what is the role of Arabic ability to the understanding in learning process at the international class program of Islamic religion faculty UMS and second, what are the obstacles of Islamic education program in improving the standard of Arabic language quality at the international class program of Islamic education. Then according to the
formulation of the problem that mentioned before, the aims of this research are first, to know the role of Arabic ability to the level of understanding in the learning process at international class program of Islamic faculty UMS. Second, to know the effort of Islamic education study program in improving the standard of Arabic language quality at the international class program of Islamic education.

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. Data collected in the form of pictures, words and everything that is obtained in the field. In this research, the data was collected by observation, deep in interviews, and document review. Then the data processed and described in accordance with the correct research principles. Viewed from the object of research, this research is a field based research. This study was prepared based on the data obtained in the field directly. So as to live up to the true condition, so it can also give meaning in the actual context.

The subject of this research is the student at international class program of Islamic religious education program. Besides students, which is also the subject of this research is the head of Islamic religious studies program, especially in the international class program. The reason to choose the head of Islamic religion studies program as a respondent because he is part of the initiator of international class program. Thus the researcher hopes to get accurate data about the needed things in this research (profile, history, the reason for the procurement of international class programs). This research was conducted at international class program of Islamic religious education program the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

2. METHOD
The word “ability” in the Indonesian dictionary means capable, skill, strength. Ability is the capability to do something. A person will be deemed capable when he is able to do something that he has not been able to do before. While the language is an important tool for human beings to express and communicate the things that are in their mind to each other. According to al-Ghalayain, Arabic are sentences used by Arabs to express their goals or thoughts and feelings. In Arabic terms is the language
used by a group above the Sahara Arabian Peninsula. The meaning of “Arabic ability” in this study is the person who used the Arabic language (who can speak Arabic language). Then, the important point of this research is “the person who can speak Arabic language”, not on the characteristic details of the language. So, the conclusion of “Arabic language ability” here is a person’s ability to use Arabic, such as the ability to listen to something conveyed by the other person, talk to other person, read the message delivered in written form, and conveying his message in written form.

Arabic has been taught in Indonesia since Islam spread over the archipelago about the 13th century AD. Formerly learning Arabic just to deepen and understand the teachings of Islam contained in the holy book of Qur’an and Sunnah, because the content of both use Arabic. Therefore the understanding and learning Arabic is necessity.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
3.1 The Role of Arabic Ability to the Understanding in learning process at the International Class Program of Islamic Religion Faculty UMS

One of the general objectives of the study program is to produce graduates who are competent as teachers in the field of Islamic religious education and ISMUBA (Islamic, Muhammadiyah and Arabic). As mentioned in chapter III point 3 about the purpose of establishing Islamic education study program at UMS Islamic faculty. Then to realize this goal, one of the ways that must be taken is through the learning process. Because in the learning process there are several aspects that accompany it, including the increase in the amount of knowledge, the ability to remember and produce, the application of knowledge, summing up the meaning learned, interpreting and relating it to the reality, and the change in personality. In accordance with the objectives of the establishment of an international class program at UMS, the learning process in international class is carried out using a foreign language as the language of instruction, especially Arabic for Islamic religious education study programs.
One sign of the success of a learning process can be seen from the student’s response to the material presented by the lecturer. As described in Chapter B, that in learning must be build an atmosphere of dialogue and a continuous question and answer process that directed to improve the ability to think of students.

The question and answer process is activity of students on the material delivered by the lecturer. Based on interviews and observations that have been conducted, researchers found that most of the students of the international class Islamic education study program prefer to ask friends. In addition to the lack of self-confidence of students to ask directly to the lecturers, asking friends more satisfying for students of international class Islamic religious education study program. But some of them also choose to ask the lecturer directly or even search for answers independently through the internet. But this goes to how the individual interests in the learning process. Because based on interview to one of the lecturers of the International class Islamic education study program, that when in the learning process some students actively pay attention and dare to ask questions directly, but some of the students still have no focus on ongoing learning.

One of the constraints of students in the learning process is the use of foreign languages as the language of instruction in learning process. This is because the level of mastery of Arabic students is still below the standard for equivalent students with the predicate of an international class, and there are also students who have not mastered Arabic at all. Mastery of Arabic higher lecturers influences how to pronounce, arrange sentence, select words used in delivering teaching materials to students. Then this is also a separate obstacle for students and lecturers.

But these obstacles become a motivation for students to continue to learn and hone their Arabic language skills. From participating in online learning through WhatsApp groups, following organization related Arabic language development, listening to Arabic conversations through online media and so on,
so that students not only learn Arabic when in class. In this case the aim of having
the ability to speak Arabic tends to place Arabic as a discipline or object of study
that must be mastered academically. But in addition students goals in learning
Arabic also vary. Such as the desire to continue their studies abroad, especially in
countries that speak Arabic in their daily language. Then the wants to understand
Islam and Qur’an more deeply, because as we have seen that Arabic is the
language of the Qur’an and its even part of our religion (Islam). This depends on
the orientation of each individual in learning Arabic, as described in chapter II
point 4 about the learning orientation of Arabic. These orientations are categorized
according to the goals of each individual in learning Arabic.

Arabic has the same role and function when juxtaposed with other foreign
languages, including as a means of expression of the soul, communication tools,
adaptive tools and social control tools.

The use of Arabic as the language of instruction in learning becomes one of
the symbols or even its own advantages for the international class Islamic
education program, considering that the Islamic education study program is the
only one of the 10 study programs that use and develop two foreign languages as
well as the language of instruction in learning process. Then in this case, the
ability of the Arabic language that is owned by students is very important even
very needed, considering the “International” logo carried by a study program with
a background in religious study programs.

Arabic language skills of students are the main capital to understand the
material in learning in the international class Islamic education study program.
This can be seen from the documentation of the student grades or learning
outcomes in materials delivered using full Arabic.

In this study finding, the majority of students who have the ability to speak
Arabic can get better grades on the material delivered in Arabic, and vice versa.
But the learning outcomes that have been achieved by students cannot be used as
a full reference. Because there are several students who do not have Arabic
languages skills, but can get very good grades in courses delivered in full Arabic. If traced, this is due to the persistence and hard work of the students themselves, as well as the greatness of the lecturers in tolerating students who do not have Arabic skills.

This shows that the ability of Arabic students is very important to understand the material in learning the UMS international class Islamic education study program. Because in addition to its usefulness as language of instruction in learning process, Arabic is also one of the conditions proposed by the study program of Islamic religious education as the language used in preparation of the final project or thesis for international class students of Islamic religious education.

3.2 The Obstacles of Islamic Education Program in Improving the Standard of Arabic Language Quality at the International Class Program of Islamic Education

In an agency, a program is proclaimed accompanied by certain objectives, in order to achieve the expected targets and successes. Based on the results of the interview with head of the Islamic religious education study program, namely Mr. Dr. Mohammad Ali, and accompanied by observations of researcher in the field, found that the constraints of the current study program are:

Mastering two foreign language as well as being separate obstacle for the study program, because the study program must divide the focus into two different directions with one common goal.

Not all enthusiasts of the international class of Islamic education study program have the ability of these two foreign languages, especially Arabic. Students often submit complaints to the study program regarding the use of foreign languages in the learning process. Whereas because of this, the lecturer must adjust the language skills of the student. Because by knowing the characters, circumstances and background of students is a must for lecturers in a learning process.
The background of various international class students in Islamic Religious education study programs, this affects the ability of foreign language students have. Student with Islamic boarding schools background have sufficient Arabic language, but apart from that, for students with high school background, state vocational school and *Madrasa Aliyah*, they have never even studied Arabic before.

Lack of teaching in the study program of Islamic religious education which has Arabic language skills, so that only a few of the lecturers of Islamic religious education study programs are willing to become lecturers in the international class.

With all the problem above, the head of the Islamic religious education study program has devised strategies as a solution to the problems faced today, these are:

Fixing terms of student recruitment, namely improving the selection process of the new students interested in the international class of Islamic religious education study programs that are right on target as prospective students of the upcoming international Islamic religious education study program.

Establish and develop intentional collaboration with *ma’had Ali Abu Bakar ash Shidiq* related to the development of Arabic for students of international class Islamic education program.

4. **CONCLUSION**

Based on the theories presented in chapter II, and the data obtained from the result of interviews, observations, and documentation that are presented in chapter III, as well as the results of data analysis described in chapter IV regarding the role of the bility of Arabic language to the level of understanding in the learning process International students of Islamic religious education study program, conclusions can be drawn which include:

The ability of students in Arabic is very important for understanding the students of the international class Islamic education study program in the learning
process, considering that Arabic is the main language used as the language instruction in learning process, and is one of the requirements as a language used in the preparation of the final project or thesis.

The main obstacle for students and lecturers in the learning process so far is the use foreign languages. Aside from the different levels of mastery of Arabic language, as well as the least vocabulary that student have, not all students of the international class Islamic education study program have the ability to speak Arabic. As well as the constraints experienced by the study program in developing standards of Arabic language quality, the obstacle to the study program in improving the quality standard of Arabic language students at the international class Islamic education study program today are on the development of two foreign languages. Meanwhile the enthusiasts of the international class Islamic education study program do not all have the ability to speak foreign languages, especially Arabic. This is due to various student educational backgrounds. Then the lack of teaching resources for the international Islamic religious education study programs, because not all lecturers in the Islamic religious education study program have the ability to speak Arabic.

Based on result of research on the role of Arabic language ability in understanding in the learning process of student international class of Islamic religious education study program, the researcher gave several suggestions for the future of a better international class Islamic education study program. Islamic studies program of international class in particular, and all international class study programs in UMS generally, can provide motivation, encouragement, and support (directly and indirectly) for students. Especially in the context of developing the quality and development of foreign languages with international standards by holding programs as follows:

To Islamic Education Study Program: Improve the selection system by holding a foreign language proficiency test for students at the beginning of the selection (for international class program registrants), Holding additional classes or special training to hone foreign language skills, for international class students or
lecturers, Hold students exchange programs or provide scholarships to students who excel or meet the requirements, so that students are motivated.

To Lecturer of International Class Islamic Education Study Programs: Creating a more conducive language environment, Strive for facilities relating to the development of student language skills, such as the use of foreign language reference books, Arabic and English.

To students of international class Islamic education study programs, Getting used to communicating using foreign languages (Arabic-English) in everyday life, even though outside learning. Always improve and hone the quality of language possessed by increasing new vocabulary.

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