

## **Problems of Arabic Teaching in the Institutes and Universities in North Sumatra, Indonesia**

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Arabic Language is the language of Islam since its advent. The Holy Quran, which is the constitution of Muslims, was revealed in the Arabic language. The last Prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h.) talked in this language. This is also one of the living ancient languages. With the advent of Islam, the language further become more standardized and sophisticated. Since then it has been chief vessel for the propagating of the universal Islamic civilization. The Arabic language has also a distinguished place among the world languages. It is one of the official languages of the United Nation.

The very method of teaching and propagating Islam galvanized the interests in teaching and learning Arabic language for the non-Arabic speaking Muslims. This led to new research in the realms of language too, which concomitantly enriched this language. Splendid works took place but a vast space for further research remained untouched.

The opinions of the historian are different about the entry of Islam. Some of them said that Islam reached Indonesia in the first century of Hijrah and other said that it reached in the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. It is most likely, Islam reached to this island in the first century.

The first region where the Islam came is Parus. This region is located in the south Sumatra. Perlak Kingdom is the first Islamic kingdom in Sumatra.

The interaction between the locals and Arab traders led to the synthesis between two languages, two peoples and two cultures. The result was the development of a symbiotic and synthesis language as well as cultures. Both influenced each other. This period is known as the beginning of introduction of Arabic language in Indonesia.

Sumatra word is derived from the Sanskrit language that is Samudara means Island. Sumatra means green land. This island is located under the western groups and its capital is Maidan. More than 2 million people are living in this island and majority of them are Muslims.

There are two types of educational institutions in the north Sumatra:

- 1 Educational institutions under the Ministry of education

## 2 Educational institutions under the Ministry of religious affairs

The Ministry of Education sponsors the general education at the schools and universities levels. The Ministry of Religious Affairs sponsors the Governments Islamic schools, institutions and universities.

The problems of foreign language education are different because the nature of foreign language is different. Phonetics as well as writing styles are different. It is easy for the Indonesians to learn Malay/Malaysian language. They face some problems in the learning of the English in comparison to the learning of their original language like Arabic.

The problems of Arabic language teaching in the institutions and universities of North Sumatra belong to the linguistic and Pedagogical problems.

### 1 The linguistic problems are:

#### a. Phonetic problem

There is difference between the Arabic and Indonesian phonetic, therefore the students face the problems during the learning of Arabic language.

#### b. Writing problem

The Malay language, which is the official language of Indonesia, was beingwritten in Arabic script. This language was written and was read from right to left. But after the Holland colonial regime, its use ended. Its writing started in Latin script. The students are habituated in Latin script. Therefore they face problem in the writing of Arabic language.

#### c. Dissimilarity in the system of linguistic construction

The Arabic language is different from the Indonesian language because it is based on vowel signs and distinction between male and female and between the singular and plural and similarity between the Mubtada and Khaber, between verb and subject and adjective and Mausoof. The Indonesian language does not have this system of distinction. There is difference in the tense, Isme-e- mosool, numerical system, prepositions etc between these languages

### 2 Pedagogical problems are:

#### a. Method problem

Teachers do not have pedagogical and professional abilities to execute the methods.

**b. Non availability of basic educational materials**

The basic book of school does not fulfill the required terms and conditions for teaching the Arabic language to students. Therefore it does not provide the basic tools and skills for its proper teaching.

**c. Non availability of adequate educational materials**

The North Sumatra universities and institutions do not have the adequate educational materials. The books do not match with the civilizational and environmental set up of students.

**d. Problems of Teaching Methodology**

Most of the universities and institutions of North Sumatra depend on the Grammar and translation methods in the teaching of Arabic language. The main reason is that the teachers do not have ability to apply the new teaching methods of Arabic language due to the lack of knowledge and experience.

**e. Non availability of educational tools**

There is lack of modern tools in the teaching methodology. Most of the universities and institutions depend only upon the blackboards.

**f. Non availability of well-qualified teachers**

Most of the teachers in the universities and institutions of the North Sumatra do not have much linguistic qualification and ability to teach Arabic language.

**g. Students problems**

The backgrounds of the students are very diverse. Some of them are acquainted with Arabic language and some of them are not acquainted.

**h. Financing and administration problem**

It is noted that the local Islamic institutions and universities do not get any financial assistance from the government and private organizations. Therefore they face the problems of finance and administration.