

THE ROLE OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE IN ISLAMIC ECONOMY

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Abstract:

This study aims to clarify the role of the Arabic language in Islamic Economy through a library research. It used descriptive approach combined with content analysis approach. Arabic is a compulsory language. When Islam expanded and came into contact with other civilizations, Arabic acted as a bridge of scholarship through the movement of translation. This movement got the right momentum, not only from the ulama, but also political and financial support from the umara, so the synergy of power and knowledge transformed into a powerful force in the development of Islamic science and civilization. Arabic in the future is predicted to play a more optimal role if Islamic educational institutions can synergize with power in establishing its role as a language of diplomacy, language of education, and language of communication in various fields especially in the Islamic economy field.

Keyword: Arabic, Islamic Economy

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran Bahasa Arab dalam Ekonomi Islam melalui studi pustaka. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif yang digabungkan dengan pendekatan analisis konten. Bahasa Arab merupakan bahasa yang wajib dipelajari. Ketika agama islam masuk dan berkembang di masyarakat, Bahasa Arab berperan sebagai jembatan bagi para ulama dengan metode terjemah. Hal ini merupakan hal yang sangat menguntungkan, tidak hanya bagi ulama tapi juga para politikus dan pemodal, sehingga dicapailah sinergi antara kekuatan dan ilmu pengetahuan yang akhirnya berubah menjadi kekuatan yang hebat dalam pengembangan agama islam. Di masa depan, Bahasa Arab diharapkan mampu memainkan peran dalam dunia pendidikan islam yang mampu mengsinergikan perannya dalam fungsinya sebagai bahasa diplomasi, bahasa pendidikan, dan bahasa komunikasi dalam berbagai aspek khususnya di dunia ekonomi islam.

Kata Kunci : Bahasa Arab, Ekonomi Islam

Introduction

Arabic is a compulsory language. Besides its role as the language of the holy book of the Qur'an and Hadith, it is also a religious language for Muslims, the official language of the United Nations (UN), the national language for more than 25 countries in the Middle East region, *lughah al-dhâd*, and the language of social heritage culture (*lughah al-turâts*). Jabir Qumaihah, for example, affirming that Arabic is the language which gets warranty and "divine protection" (*al-*

himāyah al-Ilâhiyyah), along with its use as "a container of the expression of the Qur'an" (*wi'â 'al-Qur'ân*). Arabic is also seen as a very original language; for childhood as well as elderly. (*lughah ashîlah, laisa lahâ thufûlah wa laisa lahâ syaikhûkhah*)¹

In modern times, Arabic language is growing. Even, it has different dialects of from

¹Abd al-'Alam Salim Mukram, *al-Lughah al 'Arabiyyah fî Rihâb al-Qur'ân al-Karîm* (Kairo: 'Alam al-Kutub, 1995), 3.

one country with the others². This happens because of the presence of other cultures which enter and affect the performance and style. The difference of the dialect also shows the cultural differences in each country, from various aspects. Learning the language is a window to learn Arab culture from either the past or the present. Language learning is a part of the educational process.

Arabic's role in the Study Islam Allah SWT³ as the language of His holy book is not only because of the society where Prophet Muhammad SAW. assigned as an Apostle is an Arabic speaking society (*bi lisân qawmihi*) but also because it is capable and worthy to embrace and express eternal and universal divine messages. Arabic had become the language of more than 22 countries in the Middle East and parts of the African continent, which then became the official language as well as the international language used as the working language of the United Nations, the main factor-besides preserving it in conjunction with the "guarantees and divine protection" the maintenance of the Qur'an - is vital plan (the spirit of fighting, impetus) and the religious motivation of Muslims to understand the divine messages and traditions (Sunnah) of the Prophet.

² H. F. Zarkasyi, "Tamaddun sebagai Konsep Peradaban Islam," *Tsaqafah 11*, No.1 (2015): 1-28.

³ Fuadah Johari, Muhammad Ridhwan Ab Aziz, & Ahmad Fahme Mohd Ali "A Review On Literatures Of Zakat Between 2003-2013," *Library Philosophy and Practice 0*, No. 1 (2014): 1-10.

Besides, of course, Muslims find the Arabic language to be elegant, flexible, and highly literary in transmitting various Muslim intellectual works in textual form, both books and manuscripts, which are still subject to the study and inspiration of Islamic thought very valuable⁴.

Since the coming of Islam to Indonesia, a nation by getting to know and use Arabic as a language of religion. As the language of religion, Arabic has long played an important role in the formation of a religious character. Arabic is also one of the corpus of classical civilization and the oldest known foreign language. The reality, the Arabic language has a very big role in the educational process and the development of the religious attitude of the learners as well as society in General⁵.

In the context of the Arabic language, socio-cultural developments which occur in Arab countries will have an impact on other Nations, both positive and negative. On that basis, understanding of Arabic language and culture, to the people of Indonesia becomes very important in responding to the developments, both in the fields of Economy, politics, or religion⁶.

⁴ J. P. Berkey, *The Transmission Of Knowledge In Medieval Cairo: A Social History Of Islamic Education* (US: Princeton University Press, 2014), 5-10.

⁶ Detmar W. Straub, Karen D Loch, & Carole E. Hill, "Transfer Of Information Technology To The Arab World: A Test Of Cultural Influence Modeling," *Advanced Topics In Global Information Management*, No. 2 (2003): 141-172.

Today, the development of Islamic economy provides an opportunity for us to investigate and uncover the secret language with approaches and methods that may be completely different with classic methods and approaches. New studies in Arabic language, it needs to be done to give the "lives" a life that is more relevant to modern life at the moment.

Method

This article is a qualitative method. Bogdan and Taylor define qualitative research as research that generates descriptive data in the form of the written word or spoken of people and behavior that can be observed⁷. In qualitative research methodologies, there are a variety of commonly used data / resource collection methods. James Mc. Millan and Sally Schumacher in *Research in Education; A Conceptual Introduction*, there are at least four data collection strategies with multi-methods in qualitative research, that is, participatory observation, in-depth interviews, literature studies and artifacts, and complementary techniques. On this occasion, which will be discussed further is about data collection strategy through literature method. According to Burhan Bungin "The literature method is one of the data collection methods used in social research methodology to

browse historical data"⁸. While Sugiyono states that Literature is a record of events that have been passed in the form of writing, drawings, or the monumental works of a person⁹. The method or literature study, although initially rarely noticed in qualitative research methodologies, is today an important and integral part of the qualitative research methodology. This is due to the growing awareness and new understanding in the researchers, that a lot of data is stored in the form of literature and artifacts. So that the extracting of data sources through literature study become complementary to qualitative research process. Qualitative methods are used with this then the data obtained will be more complete, more thorough, credible, and meaningful so that research objectives can be achieved. This paper tries to analyze by using qualitative analysis with the descriptive approach. Try to describe how the role of the Arabic language in Islamic economy.

Result and Discussion

The role of the Arabic language in the development of Islamic Economy

Language is a means of communication within the life of society and religion¹⁰. Man

⁸B. Burhan, *Penelitian Kualitatif Komunikasi, Ekonomi, Kebijakan Publik, dan Ilmu Sosial* (Jakarta: PT Kencana Prenada Media, 2007), 121.

⁹ Sugiyono, *Memahami Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2005), 239.

¹⁰ Azhar Arsyad. *Bahasa Arab dan Metode Pengajarannya: Beberapa Pokok Pikiran*. Cet. II; (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), 15.

⁷ Lexi Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Jakarta: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2002), 5.

is a social creature which God created for mutual relationship. There must be a tool to implement the relationship, which is a language. Language played an important role in uniting multi-ethnic society. The language used in communication called as the language of instruction. It also happens in reconciling different ethnic groups of the similar religion, like islam.

The position of Arabic as a language of instruction is extremely urgent in understanding islam. Islam is stated in the Scriptures of the Quran and the Hadith as the source of the teachings which use Arabic. Therefore, Arabic is always learned and became a learning subject in the basic level up to college level in almost all parts of the world which inhabited by Muslims. This indicates that language becomes a tool to unite Muslims from different countries¹¹.

There is another factor that became the catalyst for the development of Arabic usage, i.e. the rise again interest House of intellectuals, especially the House of the profession of the young, to find his true identity as Muslims. There is no aspect of life Islam aims regardless of their attention, among other looks from their search will be an Islamic life pattern, and search efforts were combined with another identity. In addition, there are also the needs of the House of

scholars to seek information from other Muslim areas such as in the Middle East in an effort to seek insight into the nationality that does not reduce the intensity of their religious life.

Arabic has a very big role in Muslims' life in many parts of the world. Ismā'īl and Lois Lamyā al-Faruqī appropriately described this phenomenon as follows¹²:

Currently, Arabic language is the language of about 150 million people in the West Asia and the North Africa which are twenty-two members of the League of Arab States. Because of the influence of Islam, this language determines the Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, Hausa and Sawahili. Arabic contributes about 40-60 percent of the vocabulary for these languages, and strong influence on their grammar, structure, and literature. It is the religious language for about one billion Muslims around the world, spoken in daily worship. It is also the language of Islamic law, at least in the field of personal status, which dominates the life of all Muslims. Finally, it becomes the language of the Islamic culture taught in thousands schools outside the Arab. From Sinegal to Filipine, Arabic is used as a language and literature teaching and thought in history, ethics, law and fiqh, theology fields, as well as the study of Scripture.

¹¹ Ahmad Fuad Effendy, *Metodologi Pengajaran Bahasa Arab*. Cet. IV; (Malang: Misykat, 2009)

¹² Ismail R Al-Faruqi dan Lois Lamyā Al-Faruqi, *Atlas Budaya Islam*, terj. Ilyas Hasan (Bandung: Mizan, 2003), 59.

Supported by some doctrines in Islam, Arabic language still influence Muslim communities in various places. For example, a doctrine tells that the Qur'an should be written and read in the original language (Arabic). Qur'an translation was seen as something outside of the Qur'an itself. This is different from the Gospel which must be translated into different languages without the original text included. Another supporting doctrine is the various greeting ritual acts of worship are only considered valid if it is practiced in Arabic. Inevitably, the doctrines have spurred Muslim community motivation for learning and mastering Arabic language earlier to be a good Muslim. Even the Qur'an not only learned how to read it, but also memorized the each word as a whole.

It is a convention that the language is an agreement of a community. It passes every generation of the users as well as the tradition of thought, beliefs or teachings of a religion that it represents. Through the teachings in Islam, the Arabic language continues to influence muslim society indirectly in their way of looking, thinking and being hereditary.

With the driving factor for the variety proclaimed the development of Arabic usage in this Archipelago as well as obstacles then seemed clear that religion is far more dominant than other factors, such as economic, cultural and academic factors social. It means that even though the language

was declared as the official language since 1973 by UNESCO as the international language, there is apparently a strong motive to learn Arabic which is still focused on religion.

Other evidence urging Arabic learning based on religious factor is the influx of the language itself in the archipelago, which is closely related to Islam. No exaggeration if it is said that in some parts of the world, people know Arabic language since the coming of Islam. Even religious factors are investigated with worldly interests, namely social, political and Economy are so popular that the Arabic is thus damaged due to the influx of 'Ajam society into Islam, since the time of Prophet Muhammad, the one which damages something is known by the Lahn¹³. Those who want to maintain Arabic language are typically have a high concern in the Islam and consider that the Arabic language is a symbol of his islam. The higher the concern, the higher the passion to develop the use of Arabic. The efforts to bring other motifs of Arabic learning is continued to be developed. The purpose is only for them who use Arabic with actively.

The Role of Arabic

The intellectual and historical facts described above show us that Arabic since the

¹³Muhammad al-Taṭṭāwī, *Nasy'at an-Nahwi wa Tārīkh Asyhar al Nuḥāt* (Al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyah, 1997), 9-15.

beginning of Islam until the improving of Islamic science and civilization plays at least five important roles. First, Arabic language acts as an integration language¹⁴. History shows that the majority of the nations conquered by Islam did not originally speak Arabic. However, in the development of newly liberated citizens of this Islamic ruler, Arabic language is able to unite many tribes and cultures. The role of this integration became increasingly solid and strong especially after the Caliph Abdul Malik ibn Marwan made an Arabization movement and allowing Arabic as the language of the state and its government. The role of integrative Arabic is sustained by Islamic teachings that promote integration and unity of faith, unity of relation, unity of morality, unity of thought, unity of law, and cultural unity.

Second, Arabic language serves as the language of conservation. As Islam evolved out of the Arabian Peninsula, the need for Muslims to access and understand the source of Islamic teachings (Quran) is certainly more urgent. At the same time, when some nonArab Muslims perform much Lahn, Arabic scholars feel that it is necessary to formulate the basic sciences of the Arabic language (nahwu and Sharaf). With the formulation of this science, Arabic not only

plays a role in preserving the conservation of the Arabic language and culture itself from time to time, including the conservation of turats (heritage or Arab and Islamic intellectual treasures), but also maintaining the authenticity of the Qur'an. Therefore, the formulation of science is also accompanied by the provision of punctuation (dots) and Harakat (fathah, dhammah, kasrah, and sukûn) al-Qur'an¹⁵. Thus, there is a symbiotic-mutualism relationship between Islam and Arabic, between religion and language, or between doctrine and communication media so that both develop mutually support. Without the spirit of Islam which requires its people to be intelligent in "*iqra*", it is impossible for Arabic to thrive. Third, Arabic language serves as the language of education and study. As Islam progresses, Arabic then plays the role of educational language, learning and scientific research in almost all walks of Arab society so that Arabic becomes the language of science and technology. This is supported by the enormous contribution of political and financial policies of the ruling elite, especially al-Makmun, to researchers and developers of science. The great support of the power of translation, research, and science development, al-Makmun who entrusted the development of Bait al-Hikmah research institute to Hunain ibn Ishâq rated the translation work from Greek and Syriac

¹⁴W. Lewis Johnson, Andre Valente, "Tactical Language and Culture Training Systems: Using Artificial Intelligence to Teach Foreign Languages and Cultures." AAAI, March (2008): 1632-1639.

¹⁵ Sa'id al-Afghani, *Min Târîkh al-Nahwi* (Beirut: Maktabah al-Falah, 1985), 15.

into Arabic with the incentive of gold weighing the work translation. That is, if he managed to translate foreign work into Arabic weighing 1kg, then the incentive was a 1kg of gold. At the same time, various educational institutions that have developed in Islamic areas such as Madurese Jundisapur, Herat, Harran, Iskandaria, Antakia, etc. make Arabic as the language of education and study, language of research, and the development of science. In fact, according to Ira M. Lapidus, Arabic culture is the product of three things, that is, the products of middle-class urban societies that are concerned with Islamic scholarship, the products of Arab tribal loyalty, and the products of the rulers¹⁶. Fourth, the Arabic language serves as a language of cross-tribal and generation communication that speeds up the process of transmitting Islamic values and social values of humanity among Arab society. Like the character of Arabs in general, Arabic is an open language. As an open language, Arabic from the beginning shows its ability to adapt and accept change, including adopting foreign language. In the Qur'an, can be found a number of words derived from other languages, such as: *Yirdaus*, *zanzabîl*, *kafûr*, *istibrâq*, *qamtharîr*, *salsabîl*, and so on. In this modern era, Arabic also shows its role as a language of communication in various fields,

especially political, economic, and socio-cultural, including mass media, both in the real world and cyberspace. In addition, as a language of academic communication, especially among Arab academics, a great deal of scholarly work is published through various media, also making this language more and more evolving, among other things, with the many new mufradats and terms in Arabic¹⁷. Fifth, Arabic language serves as the standardization language in the field of Islamic sciences and others. This is evidenced by the pioneering writing of Arabic dictionaries. According to historical records, *mu'jam al-'Ain* by al-Khalil ibn Ahmad (100-170 H) is the first dictionary in the Islamic world. This dictionary already has a system and a fairly solid scientific method. From this dictionary, later inspired the birth of various dictionaries in Arabic, such as Ibn Faris's *Maqâ'yîs alLughah*, *Lîsan al-'Arab* by Ibn Manzur, to various dictionary terms in various fields of scholarship which, in particular, was initiated and developed by Maktabah Lubnan in Beirut. In order to actualize the five roles of Arabic language, according to the author, the need for innovative breakthroughs both in "knowledge" Arabic and learning. For example, the orientation of Arabic learning needs to be changed, especially in the pesantren and madrasah education system

¹⁶ Ira M. Lapidus, *Sejarah Sosial Umat Islam*, terj. Ghuftron M. Mas'adi (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 1999), 138-139.

¹⁷Maḥmūd Fahmī Hījāzī, *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah fī al-'Asr al-Hadīs: Qaḍāyā wa Musykilāt*, (Kairo: Dar Quba', 1998), 137-138

(later in college), rather than as a process of spiritualization or to read the "yellow book" into a process of intellectualization and professionalization. Arabic is not simply positioned as a tool for understanding but also a medium for communication, scientific reproduction, and cultural diplomacy. The strategy is with political and academic approaches. In that context, we should be able to convince the government, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture to declare and give moral notion that the Arabic language is very important and needs to be learned, both by Muslims and others. That way, Arabic is no longer a "language belonging to Muslims" and is only studied in Islamic educational institutions. Various diplomatic and promotional activities (tourism, investment opportunities, economic cooperation, etc.) with various Middle Eastern countries need to be encouraged in such a way that the bargaining power of Arabic in Indonesia is getting stronger and attracting many interest. In addition, awareness of Muslims must also be raised, through various educational institutions and mass media that learning Arabic is not just to understand Islam, but also to understand the science, which has now written in Arabic.

The Importance Of Learning The Arabic Language

Arabic is the language of Islam and the Muslims. This started since the dawn of Islam in the Valley of Mecca on 15 centuries ago. With this language, the Qur'an was revealed to regulate human life. With it all, cover the prophets and messengers, Muhammad speaking and convey his treatise. Arabic is a language which does not fade by age and change, as he has been a crucible of Islamic civilization during the 15th century, both on the parts of both East and West. In addition, he was also recognized by the United Nations (UN) as part of the communication world along with the language of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and China. Then the really true when the Messenger of Allah told us to love the language. As said, "Love Arabic because of three things; First, because I was the Arabs; Second, because the Qur'an speak Arabic; and third, because the language of the inhabitants of heaven is the Arabic language".

There are three reasons why we should learn Arabic as follows¹⁸: First, *lughatul Islam*, Every Muslim of course expect the pleasure of Allah SWT because it is based on Islamic correct understanding¹⁹. Therefore,

¹⁸Azhar bin Muhammad, "Beberapa Aspek Keunikan dan Keistimewaan Bahasa Arab sebagai Bahasa al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Teknologi* 4, No. 2, Juni (2005): 115-127.

¹⁹A. Jalil, Abdullah, M. S., Salleh, A. W., & Nasir, M. S. "Arabic For Special Purposes In The

worship and other practices to God will be true and beneficial to human life and civilization. A logical consequence of the pleasure of Allah SWT is entering into his heaven afterlife. While the Prophet Muhammad told that the language of the communication of in the heaven is Arabic. Therefore, many Muslims are willing to master the Arabic language compulsory. Usul fiqh rules say, "A mandatory practice, which is not perfect because of something, then the thing becomes mandatory."

Second, *lughatul* Muslims. Already a provision of God that Muhammad bin Abdullah was the last Apostle sent to all mankind, and becomes grace throughout the universe. Islam, a treatise he had not prefer the Arabs over other Nations, nor are more degrees of whites over the color. Islam brought the Mission of civilization and become a teacher for humanity. Therefore requires a unifying language of Islam to his people. There is no other choice to perform the role of it, except with the Arabic language.

Third, *lughatulilmiyyah* (Science). Does Arabic have a role in this? The answer is Yes. First, because the source of knowledge, i.e. the Qur'an and the Hadith using Arabic especially study Islamic economy. Second, because Arabic is a language to unite the Muslims. Third, because the language is the richest language on the Earth. Fourth, because

Arabic is the most used language by the inhabitants of the Earth along with the growing population of Muslims.

As other languages, Arabic language also has some characteristics. This characteristic distinguishes itself and makes it so special. The characteristics are *suhul* (easy), *syaamil* (comprehensive), *jamilah* (beautiful), *mujizah* (interesting), *fathonah* (smart), and *wadhihah* (obviously).

Arabic, besides its role as the language of the Qur'an and as-Sunnah, has a role as the language of the Muslim community around the world. When one turns to the historical development of Islam it is not detached from the language. We can see the fact in some countries in Africa are still determining Arabic as the first language (vernacular).

There are many benefits gained by Muslim in learning Arabic language. Those are, first, *fahmul* Islam (understanding the teachings of Islam). By using Arabic, surely it will be very easy for us to understand most of the teachings of Islam. Because the source of the teachings of Islam (Qur'an, Hadith, and books which are written the scholars) using Arabic language. Almighty God said, "Behold, We render the Qur'an in Arabic, that you may understand". (Qs. Az-Zukhruf [43]: 3)

Second, *wihdatul Muslims* (unifying the Muslims). Arabic is a language to unite

Muslims around the world²⁰. When they use it while communicating, it will be very easy to keep familiar and retain Islamic relationship. And third, *binaa-ul hadharah* (making mankind civilization). Many positive cultures we can take from the Arabs. The positive culture became more perfect when the Messenger of Allah directed and adopted them into Islamic culture. The positive culture and the transfer will be the more easily when we master the tool of communication, which is Arabic.

Challenges and Prospects of Arabic towards Islamic Economy

The moment of painful Tuesday, September 11, 2001 seem to bring a lot of blessings to Muslims. Although the label of "terrorists" is often addressed to Muslims from the western people, the interest of Islamic studies in the West, especially the United States, is increasing. Their sense of curiosity about Islam-along with an attempt to prove whether Islam is a religion that supports terrorism or not, at least leads them to study the source of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah, which finally encourages them to learn Arabic. Before the moment, Arabic has been studied in various universities in the West, such as Canada, United States, France, Britain and Germany.

Arabic is studied as a compulsory subject for those who take Islamic studies. In their view, it is impossible to study Islam without learning Arabic. According to al-Munazhhamah al-Islâmîyyah li al-Tarbiyah wa al-'Ulûm wa al-Tsaqâfah (Islamic organization for Education, Science and Culture) in Rabat, Morocco, there are three challenges and obstacles that influence Arabic in the future (still exists and powerless). The first is to designing and formulating an educational curriculum and the preparation of Arabic textbooks for non-Arabs. The second is the preparation and training of Arabic teachers / lecturers / experts and teachers of Islamic education as well as organizing various effective training for them. The third is writing Arabic letters by Muslim. In addition to that, other efforts that need to be socialized in order to make Arabic as the language of education and culture, the language of science, and civilization is the promotion and diplomacy of culture to various countries in the Middle East, so that the numbers of tourists who visit Indonesia will be increased. Along with that, Arabic is also worthy for tourism academic curricula or other educational institutions that are oriented to provide tourism and hospitality services. That way, we can provide better service, and in turn, with more tourists or investors from the Middle East to Indonesia, undoubtedly the

²⁰ Zaheer Ali Khan Sharvani, S. Abdul Sattar, "Visishtādvaita and Wahdatul-Wujūd: Points of Comparison and Departure," *Tattva-Journal of Philosophy* 8, No. 1 (2016): 1-18.

socialization of Arabic in Indonesian society is easier and more effective²¹.

Language is the most important communication tool in interacting with anyone in the world, lots of languages are created, all of it to make it easier to communicate with others²². Language is also a major, creative, and quick communication tool for humans to convey their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Language cannot be separated from human life, because humans are using the language itself to interact. The Arabic language has its own distinct language, because high-quality literary value for those who are profound and Arabic is also destined to be the language of the Qur'an that communicates the Word of God. Because in it there are language that is amazing for humans and no one can match it.

The era of globalization also presents a new face in the social interaction of modern society. In this era there is a very tight competition, both individually and in groups. Because competition does not only occur between groups that are equally strong, but also between strong and weak. The rapid movement of information and tight

competition is a challenge for pesantren²³. Pesantren as a future leader's printing institution and community empowerment center must be able to print a generation with established resources that can compete tightly on the global stage. Therefore, pesantren must be able to face the era of globalization which was initially a challenge and obstacles became a golden opportunity for the development of Indonesian society. Obviously, pesantren must proceed and change according to the needs of the global community by not abandoning the old traditions that are still considered good. Pesantren is an Arabic language learning media that is effective in understanding Arabic language in economy.²⁴

The problem that occurs at this time is the lack of reliable human resources in the field of Islamic economy who have knowledge²⁵ of Arabic language. Despite the increasing trend in the development of Islamic Banking in Indonesia, human resource issues cannot be denied as a

²¹ Gary P. Ferraro & Elizabeth K. Briody, *The Cultural Dimension of Global Business*(US: Taylor & Francis. 2017), 25.

²² J. P. Shim, Merrill Warkentin, Daniel J. Power, Ramesh Sharda, Christer Carlsson, "Past, Present, and Future of Decision Support Technology," *Decision Support Systems* 33, No.2 (2002): 111-126.

²³ I. S. Wekke, "Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Konstruksi Pembelajaran Modern Di Pesantren Minoritas Muslim Indonesia." *Simposium Isu-Isu Sejarah dan Tamadun Islam (SISTI II) Institut Kajian Rantau Asia Barat (IKRAB)*, (Malaysia:Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2013), 12-22. Lihat Ismail Suardi Wekke, "Pengembangan Pembelajaran Keagamaan Dan Bahasa Arab Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Minoritas Muslim." *Tadrib* 3, No. 2 (2018): 187-196.

²⁴ Nurcholish Madjid, *Demokratisasi Politik, Budaya dan Ekonomi; Pengalaman Indonesia Masa Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1994), 15-30.

²⁵Euis Amalia, dkk. *Potret Pendidikan Ekonomi Islam di Indonesia, Analisis Kurikulum, Model Pembelajaran, dan Hubungan dengan kompetensi SDM Pada Industri Keuangan Syariah di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Gramata Publishing, 2012), 17.

hindrance to the development of Islamic economy in Indonesia, human intellectual capital plays an important role in promoting performance and competitiveness. Innovation in the financial industry in general and sharia finance in particular requires the availability of expertise and skill. Not only operational aspects, professionals are also required to support research and development in order to strengthen the capacity to innovate especially²⁶ in Arabic knowledge

Islamic economy was conceived in the early part of the twentieth century as an antidote to socialism and capitalism—an Islamic response to what were perceived as God-less western ideologies. The emphasis was on justice. Freedom from colonial rule and all that it meant in terms of exploitation and oppression was to be accompanied by a return to Islam that stood for elimination of poverty and reduction in inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth. Islam would help securing these goals without socialistic regimentation depriving people of their freedoms and robbing them of their properties. Islamic economy would not allow labor to be exploited by capitalists and the environment to be despoiled by greedy profit seekers. The appeal in all this was to the objectives of Islam, *maqasid al-Shariah*. There were few references to fiqh, to Shariah in the sense of laws and regulations as codified in early Islamic history. Those who championed the

alternative vision were mostly modern educated people, university teachers, journalists, political activists, poets. Even among the Ulema expounding Islamic economic system very few could be characterized as experts in fiqh/Islamic law. Even though it was asserted that Islamic economic system would be free from interest and gambling-like speculation, the mechanics of interest-free banking did not occupy the center of the stage. That came much later, in the nineteen In the early nineteen-seventies I made a survey of writings on Islamic economy in English, Arabic and Urdu languages seventies, to be precise²⁷. That development brought in the Shariah experts whose role I propose to study and highlight, but before that, there is something more to note in order to reinforce what I said above. Out of the seven hundred items included in the bibliography only 8 dates before 1920. Out of these, only 2 deal with the subject of interest, the remaining dealing with distribution of wealth (2) history (2) trade(1) and waqf (1). Of the 14 entries in the following decade only one deal with interest, the remaining are spread over other subjects. The first writings on interest-free banking appear in the nineteen-forties. Out of a total of 28 writings on Islamic economy during this period, three are on interest-free banking. Among the remaining zakat and the Islamic economic system, in general, has the largest number of writings. Though the writers in this period include Ulema trained in traditional schools, the writings on interest-free institutions are not by them.

I have made this statistical digression to establish three points. First, the project of

²⁶ Hans Dieter Evers. *Transition towards a Knowledge Society: Malaysia and Indonesia Compared*, accessed February, 28, 2018. [http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/\(de\)/soz/iw/pdf/evers_Transition.pdf](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(de)/soz/iw/pdf/evers_Transition.pdf).

²⁷ Khurshid Ahmad, *Muslim Economic Thinking*, (UK: Leicester, 1980, 1981), 10.

The Role of the Arabic Language in Islamic Economy

Islamic economy launched in the twentieth century was much wider in scope than the introduction of Islamic finance, as it was mainly focused on providing a just and humane alternative to the raging ideologies of those times, capitalism and socialism. Second, the role of Shariah experts in launching that project was at best marginal. I hasten to add that I say this not to belittle the role of Shariah scholars but to put it in proper perspective. As we proceed to describe, they do have a very significant role in the contemporary practice of Islamic banking, much more than what we noted above in the context of early days of the Islamic economic project. But their role is rather technical whereas the main project from which Islamic finance branched out was civilization, oriented as it was towards *maqasid al-Shariah*, which have little to do with technicalities. As I will show in what follows, Shariah experts have been doing what their training equips them to do, and they have been doing it well. Unfortunately, their training is no longer well designed to serve the *maqasid al-shariah* in circumstances very different from the environment reflected in the books they study. This places the entire burden of identifying the *maqasid* involved in any matter and finding ways and means of securing them on the individual Shariah expert. Furthermore, the Shariah advisory function also involves monitoring the consequences of adopting a certain course and, in the light of lessons

learned, changing course if necessary. Let me make it clear that the Shariah experts do care for *maqasid al-Shariah*. As I have argued elsewhere, there are numerous recent examples of *fatawa* given on the basis of *maqasid*²⁸.

The problem, in my opinion, is not of willingness to take *maqasid* into account. The challenge comes from the nature of the task in the new environment. These are tasks calling for not only economic analysis but drawing upon latest developments in other social sciences like sociology, psychology, political science, and management. Lacking proper institutional arrangements for training to do the task, with its necessary backup in terms of fundamental research, instances of malfunction have been increasing in recent years causing anxieties in the market and raising the possibility of a backlash in terms of consumer rejection. Third, it is only natural that the progress of Islamic financial industry be evaluated in the context of the larger project of Islamic economy of which it is an off shoot. The fact that Islamic finance fails to serve the larger goals of Islamic economy is not shocking for the short period of time since actual practice started in the mid nineteen seventies and complete itself. First, few *shar'iyah fatwa* dealing with Islamic banking and finance and providing us with a

²⁸ Fikr o Nazar, "Maqasid al- Shariah and contemporary Islamic Thinking," *Islamabad* 43, No.2, Oct-Dec (2005): 3-24.

window upon the role of Shariah experts in the development of Islamic finance date in the late nineteen seventies and early eighties.

From the above explanation that many Islamic economic concepts require Arabic to understand in depth. Many of our Arabic references are yellow or books that are still written in Arabic. A discussion of the Islamic economic concepts that are still written in Arabic. The economists of Islam also still write much in Arabic like fatwa-fatwa Islamic economic law also still written in the Arabic language. Thus the role of language is needed by Islamic economists to develop their scholarship. No doubt the role of Arabic language is very important in studying science, especially the Islamic sciences in which Islamic economy. This is because the books of Islamic sources, especially Islamic economy are generally still written in Arabic such as the Qur'an, Hadith, classic books by scholars.

The problem that occurs this time is the lack of reliable human resources in the field of Islamic economy who have knowledge²⁹ of Arabic language. Despite the increasing trend in the development of Islamic Banking in Indonesia, human resource issues cannot be denied as a hindrance to the development of Islamic economy in Indonesia. Intelligent human plays an important role in promoting performance and competitiveness. Innovation in the financial industry in general and sharia finance, in particular, requires the availability of expertise and skill. Not only operational aspects, professionals are also required to

²⁹ EuisAmalia, dkk, *Potret Pendidikan*, 55.

support research and development in order to strengthen the capacity to innovate especially³⁰ in Arabic knowledge.

Conclusion

From the foregoing point, it can be concluded that the role of Arabic as the language of religion, the language of integrated Arab world (and Islam), and the official language of UN, remains important not only in the development of Islamic studies but also in the development of science and civilization. Arabic and Islamic civilizations throughout its history can not be separated, like two sides of a coin. On the one hand Arabic can be developed because of the Qur'an, and on the other hand, Arabic should be developed as a science because it is needed to serve the study of the Qur'an. Even the qurrâ is also linguist. Arabic and Islamic sciences can flourish, inter alia, due to the inspiration and motivation of the Arabic-speaking Qur'an. As Islam expanded and came into contact with other civilizations, Arabic acts as a bridge of scholarship through the movement of translation. This movement get the right momentum, not only from the ulama but also political and financial support from the umara, so the synergy of power and knowledge transforms into a powerful force

³⁰ Hans Dieter Evers. *Transition towards a Knowledge Society: Malaysia and Indonesia Compared*, accessed February, 28, 2018. [http://www.uni-biedefeld.de/\(de\)/soz/iw/pdf/evers_Transition.pdf](http://www.uni-biedefeld.de/(de)/soz/iw/pdf/evers_Transition.pdf).

in the development of Islamic science and civilization.

Arabic in the future is predicted to play a more optimal role if Islamic educational institutions which can synergize with power in establishing its role as a language of diplomacy, language education, and language of communication in various fields, especially in the economic field.

The efforts is to prepare qualified human resources of sharia financial institutions in the future, especially in increasing professionalism that is not only related to the problem of expertise and economic skills³¹ but also knowledge of Arabic language in the field of Islamic economy because of many Islamic economic references in Arabic.

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³¹Nilam Sari, "Re-Design Kurikulum Ekonomi Syariah Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 2, No. 3 (2014): 135-154.

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