

## **Understanding meaning in solat recitation on Arabic loanwords: An experience and reflection**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to determine the student understanding through the recitation of prayers in Arabic loan words under the topics of specific Ibadah in Islamic Education subject MPU 1311 in Jempol Community College. The initial review was done through the experience documentation of the three process of reflection on the students for semester 1 July 2015. Three sessions of reflection observed in this study are understanding the meaning, memorizing prayers recitation and identifying the needs of Arabic loanwords in the recitation of prayers. This study employed a written test, oral exam (prayer recitation) and interview as the research instruments. In a reflection of the understanding of meaning, the researcher used the written test and the result showed that most students do not understand the meaning of words in the recitations in solat that have been listed. For a reflection on the memorization ability in the prayer recitation, the study uses the oral test and the results showed that the memorization of recitation in solat is still at moderate level. While, it can be concluded from the interviews results that Arabic loanwords is one way for them to understand the meaning of the wordings in the prayers. In addition, it also helps them to remember vocabulary items in the recitations in solat. Thus, this study has successfully carried out a need analysis in the conduct of interventions for effective teaching methods to help students master the vocabulary in the prayers recitation and improve teaching techniques, particularly on the topic of ibadah solat.

**Key Words:** *Solat recitation comprehension, Arabic loan words. Self Experience: Reflection*

### **ABSTRAK**

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sejauhmana pemahaman bacaan solat pelajar melalui kata pinjaman Arab dalam topik ibadah khusus subjek Pendidikan Islam MPU 1311 di Kolej Komuniti Jempol. Tinjauan awal telah dilakukan melalui catatan pengalaman dan tiga proses refleksi terhadap pelajar semester 1 bagi sesi Julai 2015. Tiga aspek yang dilihat dalam refleksi kajian ini ialah kefahaman makna, hafalan bacaan solat dan keperluan kata pinjaman Arab dalam bacaan solat. Kajian ini menggunakan ujian bertulis, ujian lisan (bacaan Solat) dan temubual sebagai metodologi kajian. Dalam refleksi tentang kefahaman makna, pengkaji menggunakan ujian bertulis dan hasilnya menunjukkan kebanyakan pelajar tidak memahami makna perkataan dalam bacaan solat yang telah disenaraikan. Bagi refleksi tentang kekuatan hafalan mengenai bacaan solat, kajian ini menggunakan ujian lisan dan hasilnya mendapati bahawa hafalan bacaan solat masih berada tahap yang sederhana. Manakala perkara yang dapat disimpulkan daripada dapatan temubual, kata pinjaman Arab merupakan salah satu cara untuk mereka faham makna dalam bacaan solat. Selain itu, ia juga membantu mereka untuk ingat kosa kata dalam bacaan solat. Justeru, kajian ini telah berjaya menjalankan satu analisis keperluan dalam menjalankan intervensi kaedah pengajaran yang efektif untuk membantu pelajar menguasai kosa kata di dalam bacaan solat dan penambahbaikan teknik pengajaran khususnya dalam topik ibadah solat.

**Kata kunci:** *Pemahaman bacaan solat; kata pinjaman Arab; Pengalaman sendiri; Refleksi*

## INTRODUCTION

An understanding of learning can help students to master the knowledge learned better (Norliza Adrus and Shaharoom Nordin, 2010). Understanding the language learning involves the use of a more creative mind and meaningful learning and these have something to do with existing information (Norhayuza, 2006) as well as to enhance the short-term to long-term memorization. The importance of memorization in language teaching and learning was also recognized by Zamri (1999:834) where he claimed that "the existing knowledge, memory retention and cognitive observed between cognitive processes that affect teaching and learning a second language". This is because learning-oriented and repetition alone makes the information stored in short-term memory only.

Most of the Muslim community in Malaysia is generally taught the basic reading of the prayer begins with memorization and repetition without emphasizing the sense of meanings. This is because these reading is an expression in Arabic whether it is obligatory (Fardhu) or voluntary (Sunat) In the Solat topics, the evaluation covers individual practical throughout the semester. The criteria assessed in Solat practical includes basic reading such as al-Fatiha, rukuk, i'tidal, sujud, the prayer between two prostrations and the reading of the last tahiyat. In the Islamic Education (MPU 1311) subject, students have been taught to perform solat under the special topic, Solat. Under the sub topics in Solat, the students learned to practice ibadah solat including the recitations in Solat, the manners in solat and wirid and prayers practice.

Memorization and repetition learning-oriented in solat recitation lesson will continue without elevating to the next process which is understanding. Al-Ghazali in debating concentration in solat has been pushing the concept of at-Tafahhum (التفهم), which seeks to understand to understand everything that is done in prayer whether the act or the read / recitation of prayer to be imbued to help reach the main goal in Solat. Indirectly, neglecting the important aspects of this understanding will affect the quality of Solat performed, even students will eventually take Solat for granted due to not being able to understand the content of reading in the prayer. (Hasna, Ahmad Shukran & Mohd Ismail 2015). So, the purpose of the study is to determine the extent of the students' understanding and memorizing vocabulary in reciting the prayers through Arabic loan words. In addition, the study also intends to look at the extent of the needs of Arabic loan words to help them improve their comprehension in vocabulary of recitations in solat. This is because the respondents are students who have never learned Arabic before.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **The Concept of Al-Tafahhum in Solat**

According to Abdullah Al-Qari Salleh (2007), in understanding recitations in Solat, there are three categories of doers:

- i. Those who know the meaning word by word in the verse recited and understand the recitation in Solat.
- ii. Those who understand the holistic meaning of the recitation without understanding each word.
- iii. Those who do not understand wordings in the solat recitation because they are not exposed to Arabic and have little interest in religious knowledge, especially in ibadah

Understanding is an essential element in order to appreciate the in-depth meaning of the wordings in prayer. Different prayer recitation implies different ways of reading and appreciation (Ahmad Hisham Azizan & Che zarrina Sa'ari, 2009). Appreciation of the solat is concentrating and feeling all the recitations in every heart beat and soul and beyond knowing only their meaning. (Sumaiyah Sulaiman, Rahaila Omar, Mahawa Pilus 2013). The appreciation of solat has a great impact as it can build up one's mental and wisdom. Asmawati Suhid et al. (2012) defines wisdom as a high thinking which was aimed to find out the truth or fact. Therefore, every human being must educate themselves so they can understand and appreciate the underlying message behind the prayers recited.

### **Understanding recitations in Solat through loan words.**

The understanding of every word in solat recitations helps to improve the understanding of recitations in solat as a whole. The focus on the glossary of the recitations in solat can be summarized into a few aspects of vocabulary as easy to pronounce, easy to understand and easy to remember. According to Che Radiah Mezah and Norhayuza Mohamad (2011), the failure to remember the meaning of words, do not understand Arabic words and could not pronounce the Arabic words correctly, have hindered vocabulary mastery and understanding among students. Thus, these three crucial aspects should be emphasized by teachers in the teaching and learning of Arabic vocabulary in class.

#### ***i. Easy to Pronounce***

In learning a second language, a language phonological aspect plays a major role because learners have the choice whether to comply to it or not. Ahmad Mukhtar Umar (t.th) claimed that this means the ability of uttering and saying words in the target language whether the learners master it or not. The similarities and differences between the first language and the target language determine whether the words are difficult to pronounce or not. If a language that has something to do with the target language, like a strong religious connection factor, it plays a big role even if the language rotted from a different language origin. For this reason, some consonants in Arabic should be given priority in the early stages of learning as it has common terms in the Malay pronunciations like ba, ta, jim, dal, ra, zai, sin, syim, fa, cuff, lam, mim, nun, ha, waw and ya than tha, ha, Thurs, zal, shod, ḍād, tho, Zho, ayn, ghayn and qaf.

#### ***ii. Easy to understand***

The second factor influencing learning vocabulary is a phrase that is easy to understand its meaning. An easy word or difficult words to understand depend largely on how it is expressed and delivered either in text form or in the context of the speech. There are some sentences that have only one meaning and there are words that have more than one meanings. Tamam Hasan (1973) stated that words with multiple meanings should be referred to the context. There are two types of linguistic contexts that connect one word to another in the same sentence such as phonetics, morphology, syntax, and semantics in the same clause.

In the sociology context or situational context, it depends on the community, culture, situation and manner. These aspects include body language, voice expression, body posture, distance and contact. These factors should be considered by a teacher in delivering any word to students to help the students determine the difficulty level of the words. Any words close to the culture and community should be given more attention than words which are not.

### **iii Easy to remember**

There are some situations where it is difficult for a student to remember a new word. Scholars have put a condition to understand the meaning of words in the store in memory. Regular use in a variety of situations can strengthen activities and a more lasting memory in long-term memory. The clear words with the meanings understood are easy to remember and are stored in the memory than misleading and confusing words. Besides understanding the meanings, the words should be used in the form of presentation, repetition and exploited in a variety of situations and events.

Based on these three (3) aspects it can be concluded that the factors influencing the level of difficulty in learning new words are the similarities with learners' first language, words with clear meanings, short words, simple words and common words. Through these three features highlighted in vocabulary learning, the researcher intends to analyze and determine the influence of Arabic loan words in understanding recitations in solat through the reflection process.

### **Arabic Loan Words**

Loan word basically means word borrowed directly from foreign languages or translated word or concept that is copied from a foreign language (Pabiyah Toklubok & Che Radiah Mezah 2011). While Mario Moain Amat (1993) defined loanwords as the taking foreign words or elements of a foreign language and then incorporated the elements borrowed into the language to be used as part of the language used. If the foreign word is absorbed into Arabic without any changes, then it is called as the absorbent (Glossary of Arabic Language and Literature, 2004:97). The absorption of foreign words is a process to enrich the vocabulary of a language so that it keeps evolving and be more dynamic. However, in this study the researcher maintain the term 'loan words' because the term is more universal.

The Arabic word borrowed into English covers various aspects of of life. However, there are some Arabic words borrowed that have undergone changes in terms of sound and meaning (Mustafa Haji Daud, 1996). In terms of sounds, some borrowed Arabic words have been through some adjustments processes such as abortion one of two phonemes and phoneme by phoneme replacement. In terms of meanings, it is revealed that there are changes in the manners of use. Among the changes are a borrowed word is given either different or opposite new meaning. (Pabiyah Toklubok & Che Radiah Mezah, 2011). Muhd Zaki Abdul Rahman (1990), divides Arabic loanwords in languages other than English into 3 categories, namely:

- 1- The loanwords of the same meaning in both languages.
- 2- The loanword with changes in semantic meaning.
- 3- The loanword which has changed the order of words or merge with other words and formed a different meaning.

According Kaseh Abu Bakar et al. (2009), Arabic loan words borrowed by the Malay language can be classified into two categories. First, the Arabic loan words are the same in English and Malay, which has kept its original meaning of the source language. Second, the Arabic loan words are the same in English and Malay language has changed either to reduction, extension, addition or distortion of meaning

Clearly, based on the above discussion, the lack of equivalent terms in the Malay language is the factor why borrowing of foreign words occurs. This makes it difficult to convey the desired meaning and concept of the language or terminology. The development of Malay

language is also heavily influenced by loan words from foreign languages such as Sanskrit, Arabic, Latin, English and Dutch. Thus, the presence of foreign loanwords in Malay language property, eases the discussion of a new word or information and knowledge transfer.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research method using the survey to collect data for the purpose of identifying students' understanding of the essence of prayers recitations and the on Arabic-based loan words in improving their understanding in prayers recitations. There are three (3) instruments used by the researcher in this study such as written tests, oral exams and interviews to answer the research questions through researcher's own teaching and learning reflection findings.

The participants in this study were Community College Electrical Installation Certificate 20 students who have secured the highest average scores among the other classes in *solat* recitation oral examination conducted by the researcher under the *solat* topic. Data collected was analyzed by looking closely at the percentage of frequency in reflection items between *knowing* and *not knowing*.

## FINDINGS

There are three (3) reflection involved in this study, the first reflection assess students' understanding of loanwords in prayers recitations. The second reflection, assess the level of understanding based on memorization of vocabulary in prayers recitations. While, the third reflection assesses the needs for using loanwords in understanding prayers recitations. The three objectives of this reflection is to understand students' understanding of the Arabic language as the students have no foundation in Arabic language and never learn the Arabic language subject before.

### a) First: To Evaluate Students' Understanding of Loan words in Recitations in Solat

By referring to a brief analysis of recitations in *solat* in table 1, there are many loan words that appear in the recitations in *Solat*. The loan words, in *solat* recitations lesson, could be optimized by focusing on students' understanding. The reason why students should understand the meaning of the words they recite in *solat* is that they will concentrate (*khusyuk*) more while performing their *solat*. Being *khusyuk* in *solat* makes the doer appreciate the *solat* ibadah more. Besides, it has a positive impact in shaping characters too.

Table 1: Analysis of Recitation in Solat

Recitation in Solat	Loan Word	Meaning in Malay	Real Meaning in Arabic
العلمين	Alam	Life on earth	The whole whole
أنعمت	Nikmat	Allah's gift	Bestowing gift
بسم	Bismillah	In the name of Allah	In the name of Allah
وارحمي	Rahmat	Merciful	Have mercy on me
الرحيم	Rahim	Merciful	Most merciful
وارزقي	Rezeki	Fortune	Provide me with fortune
صلاتي	Solat	Prayer (in Islam)	My Solat
ومحياتي	Hidup	Keep on living	My life
مماتي	Mati	Lifeless	My death
الصالحين	Soleh	Obbey Allah and his commandments	The righteous
فرض	Fardhu	Compulsory (must-do) things	Fardhu
ركعات	Rakaat	Parts in Solat	Rakaat

Based on this first reflection, the researchers conducted a written test to determine the respondents' understanding of Arabic words in loanword-based recitation. This is followed by a written test of the meanings of words in the recitations in solat conducted on Jempol Community College students, as the supporting evidence. Out of the 15 words of Arabic which is listed by the researcher only five (5) words recorded a percentage above 50 % for the group of respondents who know the meanings and the other 10 words recorded a percentage above 50 % for the group that did not know the meanings. This indicates that more students do not understand words in Arabic in recitation in solat than those who do. This statement is supported by the results in the following Table 2.

Table 2: Respondents' Understanding on Arabic loanword-based recitation in solat

Item	Know		Don't Know		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
ركعات	16	80%	4	20%	20	100%
فرض	13	65%	7	35%	20	100%
أكبر	14	70	6	30%	20	100%
العالمين	0	0%	20	100%	20	100%
أنعمت	0	0%	20	100%	20	100%
الرحمن	12	60%	8	40%	20	100%
الرحيم	13	65%	7	35%	20	100%
بسم	7	35%	13	65%	20	100%
الصالحين	9	45%	11	55%	20	100%
صلاتي	5	25%	15	75%	20	100%
محياتي	1	5%	19	95%	20	100%
مماتي	8	40%	12	60%	20	100%
شريك	7	35%	13	65%	20	100%
وارحمي	1	5%	19	95%	20	100%
وارزقني	1	5%	19	95%	20	100%

This finding is supported by a study by Nurulazidah Jaafal et al. (2013), which aims to determine the level of knowledge of the meaning of surah al-Fatihah among of the Polytechnic Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan students. The study was conducted using a survey method using a questionnaire as the instrument. A sample of 75 students from the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Civil Engineering and Electrical Engineering departments . The results showed that the students' knowledge in surah al - Fatihah is at a moderate level.

**b) The Second Reflection: To assess the level of memorization based on the understanding of vocabulary items in recitation in solat**

Undeniably, memorization is an important component in learning vocabulary. According to Abd Hafiz et al. (2015), memorization is the power of someone's mind. In addition, memorization means a mental process that emphasizes meaningful experience, depositing and retrieving it when the experience is needed to solve the problem (Abdul Fatah Hasan, 1994, Schunk DH, 1996, and Rahil Mahyuddin, 2000 ). In the context of vocabulary learning in recitation in solat, the students need assistance to enable them to memorize the vocabulary item. This is because the students who do not have basic in Arabic need to be guided.

During the oral test of the recitation in solat (hafazan), researcher found that the majority of respondents have received low scores in recitations in solat. Out of 20 respondents who undergo the oral test, only 8 students managed to get a perfect score of 10% while the remaining 12 respondents scored less than 8 %.

**c) The Third Reflection: Assessing the need for loan words in understanding recitations in solat**

Interviews were conducted to three (3) semester 1 November 2015 session students. The aim of the interview is to determine the needs of loanwords in knowing the meaning in the recitations in solat. In addition, the interview was conducted to identify whether the loanwords help students to memorize Arabic vocabulary in the recitation in solat.

Table 3: The need of loan words in understanding meanings in the recitations in solat.

Respondent	Feedback
1	<i>...In my opinion, it is important because it is the way how I can understand the meaning since I have never learned Arabic Language before..</i>
2	<i>... I think we need it because it helps us to know the meanings of Arabic words and we can memorize the meanings and indirectly we will be more khusyuk in our solat...</i>
3	<i>... We need it because we can learn Arabic language ... and this will be an extra language for us who have never learned Arabic Language before...</i>

Based on the respondents' feedback, it is found that the students feel there's a need for them to know the meaning of the Arabic language in loanwords-based recitations in solat. It helps them to understand, remember, became an additional language for them and indirectly, they can be khusyuk in solat.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The overall objective of this study was to determine to what extent do students understand the meanings of words based on loan words in the recitation is solat. The study also aims to determine the outcome of the discussion with the ongoing reflection on the researcher's personal teaching experience with Jempol Community College students. The respondents are students who do not have basic Arabic language. By right, the Arabic language should be exposed to not only the students who studied Arabic but also to students who do not have basic in Arabic Language. Moreover, Arabic is the language of the Qur'an, the language of the heaven and the language used in solat.

Thus, there are three (3) parts of vocabulary learning reflections discussed by researcher, namely, (1) The reflection of vocabulary learning in terms of understanding the recitations in *solat* (2) the reflection of vocabulary learning in the aspect of vocabulary memorization in the recitations in *solat* and (3) learning reflection on the needs of loan words in learning vocabulary in the recitations in *solat*.

Based on the reflection on learning vocabulary, in terms in understanding the recitations in *solat*, the written reflections findings show that the level of students' understanding of the meaning of the Arabic word in the recitations in *solat* is still at low level. Most of the students

find it difficult to understand words in Arabic. According to researcher's observations, these things happen because there is no exposure given on Arabic language learning particularly on the meaning of the Arabic words in the recitations in *solat*. In fact, students feel that Arabic is a difficult language to learn and master.

In terms of memorization, the results of the reflections show that the level of students in the recitation of prayers in *solat* is at a moderate level, especially in terms of memorizing verses with smooth, clear pronunciation of the wordings and the proper use of *tajwid* skills. According to Hasnida Ibrahim (t.th), in her study, she stated that learning is based on memorization of the al-Quran verser in particular should be a continuous effort and inculcated in Muslim students because they can be al-Quran literate and able to master the wide knowledge offered in the al-Quran properly.

The results from interviews conducted on three respondents who were the previous semester students, revealed that the students felt that there's a need to learn the Arabic loan words in the recitations in *solat*. This is because it can help them understand and remember the meaning of Arabic vocabulary in the recitations in *solat*. In addition, they also felt that Arabic language is necessary as it will be an additional language they learn. This coincides with the fact that Arabic language is the language of the al-Quran and the language of Heaven. Therefore, the necessity to learn Arabic loanwords-based vocabulary in the Islamic Education subject under the topic of *solat* is undeniable great.

Based on the findings of the three reflections done in this study, there some pedagogical implications observed. Firstly, the students should be helped to understand the meaning of words in reciting Arabic loanwords- based prayers. Therefore, students should be exposed to a dynamic teaching and learning process that is effective, efficient and attractive. According to Maimon Aqsa Lubis and Roslan Aspar (2005), the effectiveness of teaching methods and a more friendly relationship between teachers and students is the important thing. This is because the delivery of teaching and learning can be more organized and facilitate the achievement of learning objectives that have been outlined.

Therefore, it is recommended that as follow up, the form of action research study should be conducted. Action research refers to putting research into practice by practitioners (Shuki Osman, Hashimah Mohd Yunus & Zaida Mustafa, 2013). It aims to transform and improve existing practices. In education, the practice consists of a teacher, administrator or school counselor or other individuals involved in the process of teaching and learning. Action research is also a reflection of their own teaching and the main focus is to improve teaching practice

To test the effectiveness of interventions through an action research, a pre and post tests need to be done. It was aimed to identify the increase of knowledge in learning, especially learning vocabulary. In addition, the authorities also need to provide adequate facilities to the students and lecturers in teaching and learning.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussions, it can be concluded that the level of knowledge of Jempol Community College semester one students on the understanding of Arabic words in recitations in *solat* is still low. Therefore, the effective approach in teaching and learning needs to be



adopted by the lecturers. This is because through the effective approaches in teaching and learning, students can improve their understanding of the teaching and learning process they undergo. This statement is also supported by Mohamad Khirudin Amdan (t.th) in his study stating that the strategy and teaching methods serve as a guide to the effectiveness of teaching in order to impart knowledge to students. Therefore, to achieve effective teaching and learning strategies, teachers should choose the most appropriate methods to be used using their own creativity. In addition, various measures and efforts need to be taken into account by the authorities to strengthen the implementation of teaching and learning so that it does not become a burden on both students and teachers of Islamic education. Teaching methods that are more comprehensive and effective, especially for students who do not have basic Arabic language should be given more attention. This is because it will contribute to the effective in understanding and practice of prayer, especially ibadah solat and it can also increase the students' appreciation in a religious context.

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