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From Gontor to Sorong: Muslim Minority Practices on Arabic Teaching and Learning

ABSTRACT: "Pesantren", or Islamic boarding school, is a part of Islamic education institution growing in Indonesian culture and tradition. Arabic was chosen, because it is the premier language of Islamic religion and be started to expand Muslims capacity through training. This phenomenon is interesting to explore since "pesantren" entertain to charter foreign language as compulsory subject to master. This paper explores how "pesantren" conduct its Arabic learning and construct students' skill in acquiring the language. This research was conducted in West Papua Province. All the regency and city were observed, excluded Wondama Regency, because the institutions there were not implemented Gontor Model as a source to teach Arabic. In-depth interview and non-participant observation were employed in collecting data. Research findings show that in implementing language learning, first step to do was curriculum enhancement and tried to adapt some model in delivering the subject. Teachers as the facilitator command the process of learning and tried the best effort to maintain practice in the school and "pesantren" neighborhood. The Foundation Management Board provided books and learning media to expand students' language skills. The main media is environment, its existence strengthen communication exercise, and the same time to allocate students' drill in understanding language context. Finally, the researchers recommend further research to other foreign languages.

KEY WORD: Islamic Boarding School; Language Learning; Arabic; Foreign Language; Modernity.

RESUME: "Dari Gontor ke Sorong: Praktek Muslim Minoritas dalam Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab". Pesantren merupakan bagian dari institusi pendidikan yang tumbuh dalam tradisi dan budaya Indonesia. Bahasa Arab dipilih, karena merupakan bahasa utama agama Islam dan dimulai dari upaya untuk mengembangkan kapasitas Muslim melalui pendidikan. Fenomena ini menarik untuk dieksplorasi dimana pesantren menjadikan bahasa asing sebagai pelajaran yang harus dikuasai. Artikel ini mengkaji bagaimana pesantren menjalankan pembelajaran bahasa Arab dan mengkonstruksi keterampilan santri dalam menguasai bahasa yang diajarkan. Penelitian dilaksanakan di Provinsi Papua Barat. Semua kota dan kabupaten diamati, kecuali Kabupaten Wondama, karena lembaga pendidikan di sana tidak mengadopsi Model Gontor sebagai sistem pengajaran bahasa Arab. Wawancara mendalam dan pengamatan tak berpartisipasi digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada beberapa tahapan dalam penerapan pembelajaran bahasa, yang dimulai dari pengayaan kurikulum dan berupaya untuk mengadaptasi beberapa model yang sudah dilaksanakan dalam mengajarkan mata pelajaran. Guru merupakan fasilitator yang menjadi pemandu dalam pelaksanaan pembelajaran dan berusaha dengan cara terbaik untuk mempertahankan pelaksanaan praktek di sekolah dan lingkungan pesantren. Pengurus Yayasan menyediakan buku dan media pembelajaran untuk mendorong penguasaan keterampilan berbahasa santri. Media utama adalah lingkungan, keberadaannya memperkuat latihan berkomunikasi, dan pada saat yang sama menyediakan kesempatan bagi siswa untuk berlatih dalam memahami konteks berbahasa. Akhirnya, peneliti merekomendasikan penelitian lanjutan mengenai bahasa asing lainnya.

KATA KUNCI: Pesantren; Pembelajaran Bahasa; Bahasa Arab; Bahasa Asing; Modernitas.

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How to cite this article? Wekke, Ismail Suardi & Andriansyah. (2016). "From Gontor to Sorong: Muslim Minority Practices on Arabic Teaching and Learning" in *SOSIOHUMANIKA: Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*, Vol.9(1) May, pp.49-64. Bandung, Indonesia: Minda Masagi Press and UPI Bandung, ISSN 1979-0112.

Chronicle of the article: Accepted (January 28, 2016); Revised (April 15, 2016); and Published (May 30, 2016).

INTRODUCTION

Gontor in East Java, Indonesia becomes one of the names as the symbol of *Pesantren Modern Darussalam* (Islamic modern boarding school). The complete name is KMI (*Kulliyah Muallimin Indonesia* or School of Indonesian Muslim Scholars). Compared to the official name, the location name is considered more well-known. As the pioneer of modern Islamic education in Indonesia, Gontor has a typical place in *pesantren* world. In which the pattern developed in its educational process, then it inspires educational institutions to imitate.

Therefore, it is recently popular in terms of modern teaching in Indonesian repertoire; those are not separated from the early term starting from Gontor. Now, it is even developing and it has its own color for Indonesian *madrrasah* (Islamic modern school), the development occurred both in the institution of Gontor and alumni networks establishing *pesantren* by adopting Gontor model in the *pesantren* management. Until now, Gontor has reached Aceh, and the network of *pesantren* alumni has been spread over east part of Indonesia.

One of the development models executed by Gontor is the management of foreign languages teaching, such as Arabic and English. By adopting theories and practices from Western teaching pattern, in Ronald Alan Lukens-Bull (2004)'s secular term, Gontor education uses the mastery of *nahwu* (grammar) and *sharaf* (derivation of Arabic words from the same root), which is Arabic language as the main part of learning process (Lukens-Bull, 2004:87)). The breakthrough done by Gontor becomes a pioneer which there was a developing tradition beforehand, if *santri* (refers to Islamic boarding school naming as "student") wants to learn and master Arabic language, particularly *nahwu* (grammar) and *sharaf* (derivation of Arabic words from the same root), then the *santri* will direct got to *pesantren* of Termas in East Java. While now, for Islamic education with foreign skills, Gontor becomes the central.

The existence of Gontor makes *pesantren* is not only as a place to learn about religion,

but also as a place where has been surpassed the status as an institution starting from solely understanding religious affair to a learning process to master Islamic theology and life skills. Therefore, *pesantren* has multi-dimensional missions. As a place to learn Islamic theology, it also becomes moral references and spiritual identity, and also the central of skill training. With this role, *pesantren* becomes the agent of change and the agent of community development (cf Masyhud & Khusnurdilo, 2003; and Haedari *et al.*, 2004).

Modernization of *pesantren* is introduced by Gontor. Even, the term of "modern" itself in the Indonesian Islamic education term was introduced by Gontor. It is rooted in the tradition of *pesantren*, such as *madrrasah* in Indonesian tradition, even at that time when Indonesia had not been proclaimed as an independent country, which there is only classical system. The education is entirely centered at *Kiyai* (an expert in Islam). By using Gontor's innovation, then a new step is started.

One factor becoming the awareness of the importance of Islamic education renewal, which is later on called "modern teaching", starting from the concern regarding Islamic education graduates who solely use Arabic as a skill to interpret the *Al-Qur'an* (holy book in Islam). In fact, the needs of mastering languages is not only for reading or writing, but beyond that, it is also used for communicating skills in the other aspects, such as listening and speaking (Haedari *et al.*, 2004; and Zarkasyi, 2005).

It is a unique representation with the synthesis of various social, cultural, and religious dimensions; in the development, it mutually affects *pesantren* educational development. Then, a community which has durability as one of community development superiorities emerges (Wirosardjono, 1987:218). Through education, *pesantren* exists not only as a religious institution, but also as the pioneer in the society on religious philanthropic institutions (Sakai & Isbah, 2014).

The existence of the tradition of modern language teaching introduced by Gontor is not only occurring in KMI (*Kulliyah*

Muallimin Indonesia or School of Indonesian Muslim Scholars), but also expanding as the locomotive of Arabic and English teaching all over Indonesia, it even reaches Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, and Singapore, including through alumni network of Gontor or *pondok* (Islamic boarding), which indeed particularly learn to adopt Gontor's system.

A research concerning KMI has been a good narration, such as a research conducted by Zainul Fuad Basyir (1999), which particularly analyzed how modernization in *Pondok Pesantren Modern Gontor*, but this research only rests on the analysis about the figure of Imam Zarkasyi (Basyir, 1999). Nurcholish Madjid (1997)'s writing, which mentioned the situation of a *pesantren*, starting from the explanation about the chambers in the *pesantren* as the main component of Gontor, even though it is not specifically directed to the discussion of Gontor, Nurcholish Madjid's experiences as an alumnus of Gontor make the explanation in the book is as it should be (Madjid, 1997).

Besides, Zamakhsyari Dhofier (1985) also conducted a study about Gontor, but in terms of comparing the perspectives of *kyai* (Islamic teacher and scholar) in each *pesantren* located in Java's island (Dhofier, 1985). Likewise, Ismail Suardi Wekke & Mat Busri (2011) also conducted a research about Gontor related to Imam Zarkasyi's thought (Wekke & Busri, 2011). Another research concerned about modern and tradition in language teaching (Wekke, 2015). Those researchers specifically analyzed in terms of Islamic education renewal executed with Gontor's initiation.

A research done by Karel A. Steenbrink (1974), which is an initial research about *pesantren* provides discussion about foreign languages in *Pesantren* of Gontor. However, the explanation is just only about how Gontor places foreign languages as a specific subject (Steenbrink, 1974:18). Those researchs represent Gontor in terms of an aspect, which is not detailed related to language teaching. Meanwhile, this research focuses on the practices of Arabic teaching as the model for the *pesantren* from

other regions.

This innovation, which has been practiced by Gontor, expands to West Papua. Relating to the Arabic teaching in the style of Gontor, *pesantren* which is using modern platform tries to combine local powers with the inspiration from Gontor. Muslim minority condition becomes an element, which also becomes the condition of *pesantren* existence (Wekke, 2012:205-226).

Therefore, this research will explore the practices of Arabic language teaching in the *pesantren* located in West Papua. Furthermore, one important variable to explore is how the use of language teaching principles that becomes a model in educational system in Gontor is adapted into the existing teaching implementation.

THE POSITION OF PESANTREN IN INDONESIAN EDUCATION

Indonesian *madrasah* (Islamic modern school), as well as Indonesian *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school), is undergoing different tendency toward Islamic education in other countries by using regional study as the result of the polarization of the countries, which becomes a choice of grouping forms of identity after World War II (1939-1945). Then, it can be seen that there are several things constantly becoming Indonesian educational development, but it is not the main concern in other regions.

Madrasah, which becomes the part of learning in *pesantren*, was initially indeed established to be adapted for educational development. In the early development of *pesantren*, the pattern solely being used is the initiative from *kiyai* (Islamic teacher and scholar) or educational initiators. As the society needs, the educational institution in the form of formal education starts to develop. It cannot be separated that the readiness of *pesantren* to constantly become solution provider for society's educational needs around the *pesantren*. Furthermore, not only the settlement around the *pesantren*, but also the society which is far away from the *pesantren* sends their children to study at *pesantren*, even though their house is relatively distant from the

pesantren (cf Dhofier, 1985; Mastuhu, 1994; and Daulay, 2001).

The function of *pesantren* is also to convey *dakwah* (religious proselytizing) for internal Muslims. As the main site of religious education, the existence of *pesantren* has been an important power to understand and expand the religion. In this context, Indonesian *pesantren* has found its own specialty. Even though *madrasah* is called as a form of modern Islamic education, but it still carries Indonesian characteristics in the development.

The term of *pondok* has been known in Thailand, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, and Malaysia; but in Indonesia, *pesantren* is still considered important in society (Wekke & Lubis, 2008:295-310). Educational patterns implemented in Indonesian *pesantren* always use national awareness approach. The acceptance of various cultures and religious perspectives as Indonesians' reality always becomes the part of learning in *pesantren*. Therefore, practices and traditions of each *pesantren* are not dichotomous, but become the part of the perfection of understanding Islam.

Pesantren was only located in the villages. However, as time goes, there are a lot of cities built, so it makes many *pesantrens* built in the cities. With this background, *pesantren* does not only use agriculture as the basis of communicating with surrounding, but also as technology and communication competence as the part of learning. As the picture of *Pesantren* of Assalam in Solo, Surakarta, Central Java, this *pesantren* becomes the part of entrepreneurship pattern (Mastuhu, 1994; and Mahduri *et al.*, 2003).

Pesantren does not only provide the *santris* (students of Islamic boarding school) on religious education, but also provide them entrepreneurship training with various activities, such as cooperative and the introduction of business world. *Pesantren* can be the component in supporting the economy. Household in *pesantren* environment, as described by R. Permani (2011), can even increase the income with the existence of *pesantren* in their environment. This gives two direct impacts, such as

the participation in developing religious awareness and also economical potency to support the existence of *pesantren* (Permani, 2011:247-258). *Pesantren* emerges in form of economical formation, not just as a religious institution.

The key word of *pesantren* is adaptation toward environment, which is always stated to meet the demand of situation dynamics, including the advanced development such as character education and environmental issues also become the part of *pesantren* agenda. An institution such as *Nahdhatul Wathan* (Awakening Motherland) in Province of West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, considers afforestation, reforestation, and conservation as the main part of *santri's* activities.

An ecological awareness is even awakened from Islamic identity starting from *pondok pesantren*. A. Saniotis (2012) showed environmental ethics practiced in *pesantren* as a new fact. Although it is actually not a new message but Islam, there is a *pesantren* that use it as the main agenda in the learning process (Saniotis, 2012:155-171). This is an attempt to make Islamic education relevant with global issues development. Besides, it will put *santri* as global society.

Global society condition settles all over the world with all the diversity, not only limited to the similar identities, cultures, and practices. All of them are diverse, not identical anymore. This is also happening in *pesantrens*. Although they are the same in terms of Islamic identity, they are different in terms of culture and social background. These diversities then make *pesantrens* pay attention to multicultural education.

Raihani (2012) elaborated how *pesantren* in Yogyakarta always pays attention to the diversity of citizens, ethnicities, and values held becoming an element to accommodate in high school education curriculum (Raihani, 2012:585). It is not only occurring inside, but also outside the classroom, in this case, *pesantren* environment. As well as in *Pesantren* of Darunnajah, moral education does not only become a doctrine inside the classroom anymore, but also as practices to

build *santri's* character (Izfanna & Hisyam, 2012:7-8).

D. Izfanna & N.A. Hisyam (2012) revealed a case study with *pesantren* background showing Islam as a philosophy in *santri's* character building. It starts from knowledge internalization, and then it is supported by constant practices, and also environmental building as the supporter. These two studies show that *pesantren* not only try to relate the religious messages as understanding both as discourses and daily activities. In *pesantren*, the *santri* finishes their study and then expand it in their hometown (Izfanna & Hisyam, 2012; and Raihani, 2012).

Madrasah as religious education becomes a choice to be universal urge for humanity. For other religion and culture, Kimiko Tanaka (2010) showed how the differences of cultural diversity in Japan and also the eagerness to build diversity by starting from education aspect. Although Japanese people frequently consider themselves "atheist", political and religious authority still encourage the emergence of governmental initiatives by providing opportunities for communities in order to build education in the set of the transformation of understanding and religious practices in accordance to the demand of the text (Tanaka, 2010:845-852).

Meanwhile, Islamic education held in Finland becomes a chance for multi-cultural and multi-religion societies. Using negotiation and adaptation process, there is an attempt to develop religious education. This is a challenge which state ideology provides opportunities for each religion to carry out their belief, but also tolerate the other religions. Therefore, Muslim minority and they who are not in the position of the main decision maker need to do mediation in various levels, so that this desire will come true (Wekke, 2013 and 2015).

The other challenge is that the main flow of liberal democratic understanding, which does not unite the state with the religion, so that any religion is not given a special place to carry out education in accordance to religious spirit. These two conditions, in Japan and Finland, provide a picture

showing that each religious institution needs an adaptation and a negotiation process in its own form (Tanaka, 2010; and Wekke, 2013 and 2015). Likewise, Indonesian Islamic education, even though they live in Muslim society, it still needs a dialog and meeting of various cultures to build *madrasah* (Islamic modern school) and the other Islamic educational institutions.

In many kinds of research, they do not study specifically Islamic education in the Muslim minority regions. Therefore, the representation exists solely to describe teaching practices in Muslim internal scale. Meanwhile, interaction and meeting with the other communities can be a specific study, in which in Papua, Bali, and North Sumatra, Muslims live together with the other believers.

Thus, this study in the variable contextualization is to show the patterns used by Muslims in minority areas. Exploring this creates a comprehensive representation of Islamic society, not only in certain color but also in broad range of Indonesian society.

RESEARCH METHOD

The approach used in this research is qualitative with various case studies (*cf* Milles & Huberman, 1984; Creswell, 1998; and Patton, 2001). The choice of various studies is considered to meet research objective. As the objective is to discuss about Arabic language teaching reality, this research specifically explore Arabic language learning. Therefore, even though the other aspects are in the same unity, they are not considered as research data, such as Islamic studies and the other foreign languages.

The researchers use case studies as the research guidelines based on the demands that research data is those which are in Arabic language teaching case. The characteristics of the learning process can be considered as a case study explaining a learning phenomenon, which is emphasizing on an important issue which cannot be found in other learning conditions (Strach & Boleslav, 2008:1). Category classification, represent concepts, and produced

proposition are not intended to generalize all the learning aspects, but solely for Arabic language teaching.

Research concept referring to theoretical aspect of KMI (*Kulliyah Muallimin Indonesia* or School of Indonesian Muslim Scholars) is executed for two months, July and August in 2014. This research is considered as the early stage to build theoretical construction of a research with the main reference, KMI. Practices done in KMI are then elaborated to be field trip for the next stage.

For West Papua, this research is conducted for four months, starting from September to December in 2014. Rechecking is done in February 2015 for data triangulation. Being in the field for 5 months, this duration is considered sufficient for data collection. Moreover, the test for data validity is also conducted by doing FGD (Focus Group Discussion) in the colleges in Sorong three times, which are at STAIN (*Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri* or State Islamic College) Sorong; University of Muhammadiyah Sorong; and STKIP (*Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* or College of Education and Teacher Training) Muhammadiyah Sorong.

Observation and interview are done in Sorong District, Sorong City, Bintuni District, Kaimana District, Raja Ampat District, Manokwari District, and Fak-fak District, which all of them are included in the administration of the Province of West Papua. It is only Teluk Wondama District which is not observed, since the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in the region does not use Gontor as a part of educational references.

The interview is conducted to collect the data of three components, which are teachers, *pesantren* management, and *santri* (student of *pesantren*). There are two types of *santris*, *santri* as the students and *santri* as the peer tutor. Both are interviewed in their activities and considered as the study of observation. By using interview guide checklist to interview and observation guides for observe, the researchers combine them in the data collection process.

To test the data validity and constancy of

both guides, the researchers firstly conduct expert consultation to make sure that both of them can be adequate tool to get the expected results. The researchers ourself are the instrument of the research to answer the research questions.

Jane Baxter & Wai Fong Chua (2008) stated that conducting observation should maintain the authenticity of field condition (Baxter & Chua, 2008:101-121). Some of the main requirements when the researcher is the instrument of the research as proposed by Egon G. Guba & Yvonna S. Lincoln (1981) are concerned to limit the researcher's subjectivity (Guba & Lincoln, 1981:128-150). Those three guides in synergy produce data integrity, which each instrument cannot complete. Besides, adjustment is done to process the data as soon as possible. This is done as the opportunity in order to rely on the expansion of science.

ABOUT THE PESANTREN OF GONTOR

Pioneer Figure: "Tri Murti". Discussing about Gontor, the name of *Tri Murti* (Three Prominent Figures) cannot be separated. They are the founders and they also run Gontor since the first time. They give ideas and do practices, so that it can be continuous up to now. K.H. (*Kyai Haji* or Hajj Scholar) Imam Zarkasyi, together with his brothers known as *Tri Murti*, who are K.H.R. Zainuddin Fananie and K.H. Ahmad Sahal, they introduced what we called "modern teaching" (Misbach, 1996).

The modernization of teaching in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) is meant as an attempt to make education in *pesantren* not use traditional method anymore, but try to conduct learning process by using modern developing principles. It does not mean that modern in the Westernized definition, which was represented by colonialism done by Netherland, but modern in the sense of education management which use modern principles. It is not based on classical and hereditary regulation as the diverse *madrasah* (Islamic modern school) education.

The idea of modern teaching was actually born before KMI (*Kulliyah Muallimin Indonesia* or School of Indonesian Muslim

Scholars) was built. Conceptually, *Tri Murti* had written a book entitled *Pedoman Pendidikan Modern* (Modern Teaching Guides), which was published in 1934. Meanwhile, KMI was established in 1936 (cf Misbach, 1996; Madjid, 1997; Daulay, 2001; and Masqon, 2015).

With the support from his brother, Zainuddin Fananie, Imam Zarkasyi was equipped with the idea of modern teaching since the first time. At that time, he was studied at *Normal* (Teacher) School in Padang, West Sumatera, run by Mahmud Yunus. Then, the direction of Islamic education was directed to *Tanah Minang* or Minangkabau region. Therefore, Zainuddin Fananie who was in Sumatera realized it and saw his brother's need to understand the ideas and opinions by learning directly from one of education figure at that time, Mahmud Yunus.

From this figure, Imam Zarkasyi understood how important a method in learning process. Thus, since Gontor was established, *Tri Murti* emphasized toward their teacher about the importance of teaching-learning method mastery. Hence, the teachers in Gontor have been trained beforehand and they who are the best alumni will be chosen in each generation (Zarkasyi, 2005; and Masqon, 2015).

The feeling under Netherland colonialism crystallized an identity. The feeling of suppressed filled all the conditions to get the freedom. Where there is nationality, there is an eagerness to build an educational system based on national identity and it is not influenced by colonial education. Even so, still there is adaptation done based on the present environment. By establishing Gontor, there is a great spirit so that educational institution referring to national identity as well as adopting teaching method of European education exists as an attempt to increase capacity and acquire a maximum learning result by using religion as the axis of educational movement to create intellectual in Muslim environment. It is also a kind of challenge to get freedom from colonialism.

Institution establishment is the main supporter in educational development

process in *Pondok Modern Darussalam* (Islamic modern boarding school) Gontor. Since 1951, it has been declared that the properties possessed by *pondok* is fully Muslim's which is represented by Agency Endowments. At that time, it was on the celebration of quarter century of *Pesantren* of Gontor establishment. Furthermore, it was declared in front of 15 representations of IKPM (*Ikatan Keluarga Pondok Modern* or Association of Modern Islamic Boarding Family) as alumni representation, and *Tri Murti* as the founder (Zarkasyi, 2005; and Masqon, 2015).

This endowment consideration was done with an expectation that their children after *Tri Murti* resigned later on, they cannot claim the properties possessed by *Pondok* since the property management has been given to Agency Endowments. So far, there are several problems concerning Indonesian education. When the founder of *pondok* passed away, and he does not have any charismatic and capable children, so the support from society will be decreased. To avoid this occurring in Gontor, it has been managed by a party, which is not from individual but institution (cf Dhofier, 1985; Zarkasyi, 2005; and Masqon, 2015).

From Gontor's patterns, it can be proved that learning Arabic language can be an interesting subject and easily mastered by *santri* (student of Islamic boarding school), only with the preparation done since the first meeting when the *santri* has just stepped in Gontor. This structured teaching pattern can be an event for *santri* to improve their skill to be a leader, following learning process, and hone responsibility. The *santri*(s) included as organization committee will build confidence and then hold the leadership in a certain level, all of that starting from *Tri Murti*'s inspiration as the initiator as well as the creator of Gontor early development. In the next development, it is not only in Gontor, but also reach all over Indonesia.

Gontor's Language Teaching Practices. Arabic language teachings as well as English are constantly executed. Starting from arranging language teaching curriculum which is four-skills oriented.

However, listening and speaking skills are concerned since the early class. *Muhadastah* (conversation) is taught since the first day a *santri* (student of Islamic boarding school) officially learn as Gontor's *santri*. In addition, *qawaid* (grammar) are taught in the grade 2. However, this is not done by memorizing language rules and structures. It is always begun with providing an example in the form of a sentence. When the *santri* has memorized the *uslub* (the patterns) of the language, then at the end of the class, they will be introduced to the terms or rules underlying those sentences.

The methods used in the *pondok* (boarding school) are *al-thariqah* (direct technique) and *al-mubasyarah* (direct method). Languages teaching, inside classroom or exercises and additional lessons, done in mosque or dorm room, all of them refer to the principles of those methods. The translation into mother tongue is not used in the learning process, unless it is very important. All the explanation is conveyed in Arabic, if it is the subject. The use of target language is also used maximally since grade 2.

Therefore, the subjects related to Islamic repertoire are taught using Arabic, such as *Al-Hadist* (words and deeds of Prophet Muhammad), *Al-Qur'an* (holy book in Islam), and the history of Islam. One of method demands is that the importance of enhancing exercises to encourage the mastery of languages actively. Thus, a continuous exercise is needed to improve *santri's* competences in mastering the memorized vocabulary, so they can be placed in various sentences, not limited to certain sentences.

This policy can be executed maximally, which the teachers are KMI (*Kulliyah Muallimin Indonesia* or School of Indonesian Muslim Scholars)'s alumni; they are the students of ISID (*Institut Studi Islam Darussalam* or Darussalam Institute of Islamic Studies). The qualification of the teachers who are Gontor's graduates, the mastery of Gontor teaching methods and practices can be done well. Spirit, skills, desire, and dedication unite as one as a teacher's profile. Without any support and

readiness of the teachers who understand the teaching process being proclaimed, it cannot be done as expected.

Therefore, to prepare teachers is the main agenda. In the context of KMI, all is taking place in synergy. The teachers are the best graduates from the Central of Gontor. Furthermore, they teach while studying as students. As they get in approaches, methods, strategies, and styles, those are adopted again with continuous improvement, so that what becomes Gontor concept will not be ignored, due to the lack of teachers. Otherwise, it is then combined with the patterns in college. Hence, it does not obstruct the *santri* to learn as the qualification of the teachers. They even have a higher level than the *santri* (Nafi *et al.*, 2007; and Sulaiman, 2008).

The book supply of guidance books or textbooks, it is provided simultaneously. The learning activities use book, such as *Durus al-Lughah al-Arabiyah* (Learning the Arabic Language). By using this book, the learning process is considered the rule as the main discussion. There is no introduction of the term *qawaid* or *nahwu* (grammar) and *sharaf* (derivation of Arabic words from the same root). It is different from the other book, which is trapped discussing about Arabic language, not to use the productive language.

Vocabulary becomes an important discussion in the book, and then the word is placed in sentences. Moreover, each the vocabulary item is given an example to be used in various sentences. This makes the *santri* encouraged to memorize the vocabulary as the part of using those vocabulary items in sentences in order to familiarize themselves in practices. When being in the *pondok*, the sentences practiced in the class should be practiced outside the class. Thus, the practice is the main key of the learning (Nafi *et al.*, 2007; and Sulaiman, 2008).

Since beginning, the *santri* was asked to write although they still have limited vocabulary. When they have sufficient vocabulary and it can be used in the *pondok*, *santri* will be introduced to the grammar, such as *nahwu* and *sharaf* in order

to understand the language structure. However, *i'rab* (description) pattern which discuss in detail about the position of each word in a sentence. They are only asked to practice all the vocabulary from the pattern has been taught, including those which have been memorized since the first time they learn Arabic language. For the advance level, such as *balaghah* (metaphora) and *al-lughah* (language) are only for introduction, and that is only given for two years. The suitability between language and literature becomes the last polish for *santri*'s competence (Mastuhu, 1994; Madjid, 1997; Mahduri *et al.*, 2003; and Nafi *et al.*, 2007).

It means that language teaching literally uses the language itself. It is different from the existed teaching-learning activities, which are using *Al-Thariqah al-Qawaid wa al-Tarjamah* (Grammar and Translation Method). Those methods only discuss about how the grammar function in a sentence. Next, the sentence is translated into English or Arabic language. Consequently, the *santri* is accustomed to strict rules so that they are afraid of mistakes when using Arabic language.

Sometimes, the teaching-learning activities rest on the discussion about language, but not how the language can be used as skill. Thus, by using this method when learning Arabic language for the first time, the *santri* will only have passive skill. The skills such as listening, explaining grammar, and translate it into mother tongue are actually not an urgent need for language learning process, if it is for communication. However, for the next level, this competence is still needed, especially for the advanced religious needs (Mastuhu, 1994; and Madjid, 1997).

To run what they want, the basic foundation is in *Panca Jiwa Pondok* (Five Values of Islamic Boarding). By using *Panca Jiwa Pondok* as the basic foundation in the learning process, it will build the good characters such as obedient to any principle, soul, and personality which is appropriate based on Islam. Thus, any obstacle in the learning process is considered as a practice to achieve perfection in the next stage.

A seemingly unimportant question, but is always repeated "*What are you looking for in Gontor?*". This question is a kind of reflection which is so important for the *santri*. Accordingly, there is no time to waste for playing around which does not have any education unsure. All activities, which ultimately gather as the part of the learning process itself, can be found in the *pesantren*.

Pesantren becomes the main proponent for the performance of language teaching practices. In fact, the environment is considered as the tool of communication. The expressions and the speech being used in the *santri*'s daily communication are done in *pesantren*. There is a regulation that the *santri* must use Arabic or English in certain time. Besides, the use of local language is highly forbidden. For the new *santri*, they are given 3 months to use English, while learning the basic Arabic.

Thus, the *santri* use the language taught in various conditions. The *pesantren* becomes the place to practice. With this pattern, the language being used allows the *santri* to produce speech in Arabic, as well as giving chances to practice memorizing. Interaction among people in *pesantren* is done using foreign languages. It includes announcement and information delivery which should be known by public.

The description above shows that there is no advanced technology or a spectacular method used in Gontor. However, the determination is guided by *pondok* management equipped with *Tri Murti* (Three Prominent Figures), the three leaders as the driving force. The foundation of education determined by *Tri Murti* beforehand becomes the continuous guide.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Gontor's key of success is due to the consistency, both in the regulation and the execution. Thus, the combination between rules and implementation always colors the teaching programs, which are applied since the beginning. It includes the use of Arabic language. Teaching and learning media, and using the provided equipment in *pesantren* optimize it (cf Mastuhu, 1994; Mahduri *et al.*, 2003; and Nafi *et al.*, 2007).

PESANTREN IN WEST PAPUA: MUSLIM MINORITY ENVIRONMENT

The development of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in West Papua, from Sorong to Fak-fak, chooses Gontor as one of their references to develop education. Nevertheless, one distinguishing factor is that the social environment, where in West Papua, Muslims become a minority. Thus, the interaction with other people from other religion gives the support to the development of teaching in *pesantren*.

This research is conducted only by doing interview and observation in *pesantren* using Gontor as one of the references in arranging curriculum, as well as using the curriculum as the reference. Even so, it not fully adapt Gontor's curriculum in the whole system. Therefore, this research is solely limited to Arabic teaching aspect. These factors are then accumulated in the article of this research related to Arabic language teaching conceptualization in *pesantren* for Muslim minority by exploring the setting as research location.

The determination of the curriculum since beginning collects the curriculums of *pesantren*, which has been used and stabilize the institution as the *pesantren* which function to develop religious missions. Some of the analyzed curriculums are *Pesantren* of Gontor in Ponorogo, East Java; *Pesantren* of Darunnajah Ulujami in Jakarta; *Pesantren* of Assalam Solo in Surakarta, Central Java; and *Pesantren* of Tebu Ireng in Jombang, East Java. In terms of Arabic language teaching, it only uses Gontor's curriculum as the basis to be adapted in accordance with the people competence as well as formal system implementation.

Pesantren in West Papua uses medium level of education system referring to the curriculum arranged by Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia and/or by Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. For the institution referring to Ministry of Education and Culture, it uses Junior or Senior High School. Meanwhile, those who are referring to Ministry of Religion Affairs, then, they use *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic Junior

High School) and *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic Senior High School). Hence, Arabic language subject solely refer to that formal curriculum.

There is also additional lesson after school, it uses *Madrasah Diniyah* (Islamic Religious School)'s curriculum determined by Ministry of Religion Affairs. The implementation of this curriculum completes learning material, which is only delivered generally in formal subjects. Therefore, the completeness of learning material in this curriculum is considered as an effort for the *santri* (student of Islamic boarding school)'s religious understanding which is merely in the form of material mastery determined in the curriculum, but also use the need of environment as the basis in accomplishing material (interview with Respondent C, 17/11/2014).

The use of the term *diniyah* here refers to only the religious programs. Thus, the curriculum arranged by Ministry of Religious Affairs is not fully as the standard reference, but merely as the term to give religious reinforcement. Although Ministry of Religious Affairs' curriculum uses the term *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* and *Madrasah Aliyah*, the religious component is still lesser than the subjects termed in the general disciplines.

The existence of *Madrasah Diniyah*'s curriculum bridges the gap between the lack of religious subjects used during the period in formal education. Thus, the competence of Arabic language mastery in *diniyah* system is considered as a main attention. However, by using time unit, learning process of Arabic language will always lack of time to implement practices. Then, dorm system becoming the *pondok* pattern provides opportunities to enrich practices in the environment. The use of term for the subjects being used is also different. If the formal education uses *nadzariyah al-wahdah* (integrated system), whereas in *pondok* it uses *nadzariyah al-furu* (separated system). There is also learning activities in praying periods and additional language lesson in the dorm as the chance to enrich vocabulary as well as practice speaking or *muhadatsah* (interview with Respondent B, 10/11/2014).

The dorm pattern used to give learning chances to the *santri* is considered as a choice as well as learning environment. Just as the language being learnt in the program implemented, it not merely uses grammar aspect. However, it fully uses communication context in the environment as the place for practice. Meanwhile, it is supported by the relationship of the roles between the listener and the speaker as the time and place, where the speech is produced. This will influence the diction in the context of communication taking place at that very time (interview with Respondent G, 16/12/2014).

The suitability factor in each role involvement becomes the chances in social interaction. It also will build a relationship between the components of *pesantren* as an independent society. Therefore, learning process is not only done inside the classroom, but the actual learning is taking place around *pesantren* completed with real condition as well. In this case, the skill mastered by the *santri* is not limited to the theory, but they will master a natural mechanism, such as the involvement in a discussion, delivering opinions or definitions, building relationship in communities, and maintaining the direction of conversation (interview with Respondent F, 9/12/2014).

With this dorm pattern, teachers in *pesantren* have double roles, such as the communication facilitator and independent participant. The relationship between both roles allows the teachers to be a learning source. Together with *santri* in all activities, they will create a synergy, so that both *santri* and teachers produce learning experiences. The cooperation between them will accommodate *santri*'s interest, needs, and competences in learning. The full-time teacher who are living in *pesantren*, already have the experiences in making lesson plan in accordance with *santri*'s needs, evaluating achievements, and determining the next material (interview with Respondent A, 3/11/2014).

Learning languages, especially to master communication, taking place in each

opportunity such as after *Shubuh* (early morning prayer) and after *Ashar* (afternoon prayer), the teaching process does not use standard text but is completely absorbed from communication process in daily activities. Grammatical rules is not provided specifically, but is directly delivered in language pattern. Meanwhile, the *santri*(s) are asked to directly interact with other *santri*, and also correct the learning mistakes which are really understood (interview with Respondent F, 9/12/2014).

The success and the fluency are the results of the organization of communication process implementation. The practicality aspect becomes a consideration, so that the activities are taking place functionally. There are three things which ultimately end up as the motivation to keep learning are the actual communication activities, meaningful tasks, and the use of meaningful and authentic languages. The language proficiency will always survive with the support of performance, which the language is constantly used in the real life (interview with Respondent E, 2/12/2014).

There are several books used as textbooks. They are published by Gontor such as *Durus al-Lughah al-Arabiyah* (Learning the Arabic Language), *Amtsilah al-Jumal* (Sentences' Examples), and *Al-Tamrinat* (Assignments). To complete these books, they also use books such as *Silsilah Ta'lim al-Lughah al-Arabiyah* (System of Learning in the Arabic Language) and *Al-Arabiyah Baena Yadayk* (the Arabic between Your Languages). In the use of book, which is used simultaneously in each early week before starting the learning activity, the teacher will discuss the learning material being taught for a week or six days. By using those books as teacher-book, *santri* will get the explanation as the learning material written by the teacher on the board. There is also several duplicated material. The book *Durus al-Lughah al-Arabiyah*, for example, is compulsory as student-book. It is because that book has exercise parts to be enrichment after lesson hours over (interview with Respondent D, 24/11/2014).

Four kinds of language proficiency can be achieved in various programs. For

formal education, the subjects are applied to achieve to kinds of skills which are listening and reading. Meanwhile, speaking and writing skills are practiced outside lesson hours included in *pondok pesantren* system. Although they have been classified into groups, the portion for vocabulary mastery with memorizing in terms of speaking skill is taught every day, especially after two prayer times, *Shubuh* and *Ashar*.

Meanwhile, *Al-Qur'an* (holy book in Islam) recitation is done after *Isya'* (evening prayer), which also provide opportunities for *santri* to learn reciting *kitab kuning* (classical Arabic book) with *fiqh* (study of laws pertaining to ritual obligations) and prayer practices. Thus, Arabic teaching keeps developing the *santri's* competence in using language in various aspects completely. The relationship between those four skills is practiced step by step and all of them always give opportunities to do adequate practices (interview with Respondent B, 10/11/2014).

Finally, the key of adaptation used from Gontor's model is the practices in the real condition. This becomes the main concern which if inside the class each *santri* cannot practice simultaneously. Only with rotation system, they can get the chance to obtain iteration and this is not in the real condition. Then, *pesantren* environment provides a place to practice as well as reviewing learning material taught.

The expression produced by *santri* will be a habit. In the early stage, it is indeed very careful to use grammatical patterns, but in the next stage those patterns have been formed, so that communication process has been taken place automatically. In this goal, Arabic language teaching is intended to be achieved (interview with Respondent C, 17/11/2014).

THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION: FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN

This research shows that Gontor start an effort to introduce learning with the main purpose in order to master language skills. From the practices existed in that era, language teaching merely rests on *qawaid wa tarjamah* (grammar – translation). With

Gontor's initiation, language teaching is called as "modern teaching". The use of the word "modern" refers to an organized teaching, completed with curriculum as reference, and the method used in the teaching-learning process has been determined.

The word "modern" itself is literally introduced as the adoption of teaching patterns, which is done by referring to practices implemented in European countries. However, the word "modern" actually rests on the innovation of teaching patterns taking place traditionally then adopting recent education. Furthermore, the combination between the previous existed education in *pesantrens* (Islamic boarding schools) are transformed into modern teaching starting from developing curriculum, writing textbooks, implementing method in accordance with the learning objectives, and creating environment which supports learning process (cf Hasan, 2008; Sukmadinata, 2008; and Zaini, 2009).

Meanwhile, the traditional term is more at the implementation of education patterns using learning system, particularly maintaining the tradition which is held since a long time, it is also known with the term *salaf*. This shift occurs because the demand of the *santri* (student of Islamic boarding school)'s language proficiency is not merely to understand *Al-Qur'an* (holy book in Islam) but also to communicate. Meeting with Muslim communities from other countries in various opportunities open the chances for cooperation. Therefore, it is not limited to translate a message but also to respond it. It is needed in the context of theologian cadre. In the modern teaching pattern, it is done by using *takhassus* (special program) system. It is programmed for *santri* with high proficiency.

Being introduced to modern system does not mean that traditional system is completely abandoned. This helps *santri* to achieve the ultimate goal of learning. This is also related to global condition, where language becomes the door to understand the current development. This research

found that modern teaching will help *santri* to master Arabic language actively.

Traditional education using one-way communication does not have any adequate chance in building listening and speaking liveliness. Otherwise, traditionalism is needed for the process of grammar-translation understanding. In the education stage of secondary school after active mastery, they will be introduced step by step how those patterns form the existed speech. It is not taught using recitation or merely in *qawaid* (grammar) and the included attributes.

Gontor's model then becomes one of the references of other *pesantren* established in West Papua. *Pesantren* challenge in Muslim minority is how build institution harmony and synergy, so that it can create Islamic education which can produce graduates who are mastering Islamic science. It is an opportunity in building *pesantren* education as one of the tool of empowerment (Wekke, 2013:374-395).

Muslim minority is not a condition in which this is becoming obstacle. Since in the national identity, Muslims are still in majority. As explained by Ayman K. Agbaria & Muhamad Mustafa (2014), Palestine Muslims in the regions claimed by Israel, they are still able to implement education. Various efforts starting from curriculum arrangement to graduates' competence achievement are done as programmed (Agbaria & Mustafa, 2014:44-57).

This means that Israel's action is accepted as an annexation, then, Palestine Muslims in the colonial land still have spirit and effort to keep strengthening the capacity of Muslim. In the condition of foreign authority, Muslim communities always try to build educational institution in the set of religious understanding transformation. One of them is cooperation between the teacher and the principle in implementing specified program (Cheung & Wong, 2011:453-473). All of them will lead to learning success in spite of a great challenge.

Environmental aspect becomes the main key of Arabic language learning process success. As in Gontor's model,

environment also becomes the place to study. The readiness of the teachers and educational management since beginning is intertwined part of expected language skills achievement. This research finding is in line with a strategy to creating environment to support religious teaching (Wekke & Sahlan, 2014).

The attendance of the teacher directly will give feedback in learning process. As in the research conducted by M. Seker & A. Dincer (2014), which also shows teacher factor in the learning process, will optimize the learning result itself. Likewise, it is related to concept determination and implementation which do not use pragmatic factor as the part of education that can disturb the education process itself (Seker & Dincer, 2014:73-83).

However, on the other side getting the challenge as shown in J.R King & R. Chetty (2014)'s research that how a language teaching environment can get the translation. Nevertheless, various obstacles can be learning chances with the collaboration of various existed components (King & Chetty, 2014:40-50). A research conducted by Lydia Tan-Chia, Yanping Fang & Pow Chew Ang (2013) showed that learning process with collaboration pattern will help language learning achievement optimally (Tan-Chia, Fang & Ang, 2013:256-280).

Finally, language teaching can be done in *pesantren*(s) of Muslim minority, showing that there is *santri*'s eagerness to master Arabic language. This is because the cooperation factor which becomes the atmosphere of the *pesantren*. This cooperation will encourage the improvement of *santri*'s focus and participation as explained by Y. He & K. Prater (2014:32-44), as well as Muslims' expectation and willingness put in the *pesantren*.

With this condition, the *pesantren* management always tries to look for breakthrough in order to meet the expectation. The continuous practices for teachers, adding textbooks as learning source, and building cooperation with existed *pondok* (Islamic boarding) in Java island are kinds of initiative which allow the supports for the program implementation.

CONCLUSION¹

Arabic language teaching in West Papua is a kind of adaptation in two aspects, which are teaching pattern which exists in homogenous Muslim regions; and the second is an adaptation with environment interacting with the followers of other religion. West Papua and the meeting with the other people from other religion give demand as well as chances for Islamic educational institution to develop teaching practices oriented to Islamic education continuity in fulfilling the environment's needs. Arabic language as the main unsure in Islamic studies gets the bigger portion than other material. It is related to the mastery of Arabic language which is the foundation to understand Islamic studies in the next context.

Thus, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in this research forms awareness for its runner in order to use competences and mastery of Arabic language as the main goal since the beginning. By mastering it, it will be the key to master Islamic sciences in the next stage. Gontor's model used as the learning reference of Arabic language is considered as reference, but there is an adjustment process as the environmental needs.

The condition of environment builds social identity, which then taking part in the continuity of educational development. The learning process completely cannot be separated from environment, so that the learning material and skills achievement is oriented to environmental needs.

Therefore, the reference is as the learning source, as well as maintaining the relevance with the region, and becoming a consideration in leaning material determination. Since beginning the *santris* (students of Islamic boarding school) are given practices to build learning awareness, so that it can construct it as learning dynamic proponent. This character building will be a part of communal so that they are always demanded to meet the learning target with an expectation to be a part of society changes which can be achieved through learning process.

One of the targets in the implementation of Arabic language teaching is referring to the attempt to master active communicative competence. With this achievement, it will help the full understanding of Islamic studies. The use of *kitab kuning* (Islamic old heritage book) is still needed, but it is not the only one. Book as the modern product is also used simultaneously, so that the *santri* can master two spheres of science. Both are classical tradition which has been institutionalized in Islam and an advanced development which becomes the sign of advanced knowledge.

Meanwhile, the main proponent in mastering Arabic language is the existence of environment as the place of practices and as the part of learning process. The reality is taking place with communication, this becomes a chance to express the mastered skills and if it is done repeatedly and continuously, then, it will create good language proficiency.²

¹**Acknowledgements:** We would like to thanks to my colleagues in STAIN (*Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri* or State Islamic College) Sorong, West Papua, for the kind discussion during the data collection and article writing. *Lembaga Persada Papua* (Papua Homeland Institution) is one of the facilitator during Visiting Fellowship in Oxford University of United Kingdom, and Umm al-Qura University of Saudi Arabia. The fellowship conducted with the fund support of DIPA STAIN Sorong in 2014. Abustani Ilyas, Hamzah Khaeriyah, Fatimah, Sukman, Indria Nur, Akramun Nisa, they always provide time and support in since research proposal to publication. This article dedicated to our beloved STAIN Sorong and *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) Nurul Yaqin in Sorong, West Papua. In addition, this is to commemorate the tremendous energy of Gontor in contributing to nation building. However, all contents and interpretations pertaining this article are solely rested to our own personal responsibility academically.

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²**Statement:** We, hereby, certify that this paper is our own work. So, it is not product of plagiarism, due to acknowledgment is made in the text for materials written by other authors and researchers. So, all citations and sourcecs in the text analysis, we have shown fully in the References. Finally, we also declare that this paper has not been submitted and reviewed by other publishers as well as not been published by other scholarly journals.

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