

Funnun Taqdim Al-Arabi Technique in Teaching Grammar for Integrated Dini Curriculum

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Abstract

Teachers should diversify their techniques in teaching. The purpose of this study is to explain the application of *Funnun Taqdim al-Arabi* (FTA) or fun learning implemented in the process of grammar teaching and learning. Grammar teaching is theoretical and practical and is part of the *al-lughah al-Arabiah al-Muassiroh* Integrated Dini Curriculum's textbook. Grammar knowledge is fundamental to learning Arabic. However, the difficulty of learning grammar knowledge is often expressed by students in their effort to try and understand it. Therefore, the FTA is used to make grammar teaching easier to understand and to make it fun for students to learn. The design of this study is a case study using the qualitative method. Data collection was made based on interviews, teaching and learning observations and document analysis. Various techniques can be applied in grammar teaching to enable students to better understand and have them actively engaged in the teaching and learning process. There are several FTA techniques in the teaching of Arabic language skills such as the *hiwar* technique, language games, singing techniques, storytelling, Arabic choral speaking (*kalam jama'ei*), acting, puzzles and exploration. In the context of this study, the application of the FTA techniques based on the findings of the study were language games such as the poisonous box game, sentence fragmentation, singing techniques, gamification such as *Kahoot* and quizzes implemented in the grammar teaching lessons. The implication of this study is that teachers need to master and apply FTA techniques in order to facilitate students' understanding of grammar teaching under the Integrated Dini Curriculum.

Keywords

Rammar Teaching, Integrated Dini Curriculum

1. Introduction

Funnun Taqdim al-Arabi (FTA) is fun education. According to the (Council

Dictionary 2007), education is defined as nurturing, guarding, caution and teaching. Fun is defined as pleasure or happiness. With that, fun education or fun learning can be summarized as an approach to teaching and learning that is relaxing and entertaining such as games, singing, storytelling, acting and poetry, done systematically and in an organized manner. Teachers and planned activities play a major role in the successful implementation of the FTA technique in teaching. Therefore, when planning an activity, a teacher should take into account its suitability with the students' levels or abilities. In addition, teachers should provide clear and understandable instructions. FTA or fun learning can be applied in all subjects. In the context of this study, the subject matter is the grammar teaching under the Integrated Dini Curriculum (IDC). This grammar teaching is learnt by Form 3 students beginning in 2017 and Form 4 students in 2018 in the textbook *al-Lughah al-Arabiah al-Muassirah*. IDC was recognized as a national curriculum in 2012 and has been implemented in the Government-Aided Religious School (GARS) beginning in 2015 (Farihah et al., 2017). Grammar knowledge is the basis in the learning of the Arabic language and the Quran. Therefore, grammar knowledge needs to be taught with a variety of techniques to enhance students' understanding. Among them is the FTA technique or fun learning. There are various FTA techniques in the teaching of Arabic language skills including language games, *hiwar*, storytelling, Arabic choral speaking (*ka-lam jamaie*), acting, exploration and riddles or puzzles. In this context, teachers play a significant role in the success of FTA activities in teaching. Teachers who are of quality and have confidence in the content they deliver will help students better understand the things that have been taught to them. The use of a variety of appropriate teaching techniques will make students to become more active and hence enable their teachers to develop higher confidence (Mastura & Kaseh, 2012). The quality and effectiveness of teaching depends on the teachers' confidence and abilities. That is also known as teacher self-efficacy.

2. Teacher Self-Efficacy

The definition of teacher self-efficacy by some western secularists is a teacher's belief and confidence in his/her ability, aptitude and skill to teach (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Another definition of teacher self-efficacy refers to one's confidence in one's ability to learn, to act at a level that is required, to manage tasks and to achieve the desired results (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Past researchers have noted that teachers with high self-efficacy are capable of accepting and making changes to new ideas in order to improve student achievement. They are also able to deal with the weak students rationally (Mardhiah & Rabiatul, 2016). In the context of this study, the meaning of teacher self-efficacy is the confidence and ability of teachers in delivering content in Arabic (Farihah et al., 2018a) using FTA in grammar teaching under the Dini Integrated Curriculum. Teacher self-efficacy was assessed based on teacher-designed strategies. One of the strategies the teachers used was the *Funnun Tadqim al-Arabi* (FTA) technique.

3. Methodology

The design of this study is a case study by using the qualitative method. The case studied was the teachers' confidence in implementing a variety of techniques in grammar teaching. The data collection method used in this study was through interviews, observation and document analysis. Participants were seven people consisting of five male teachers and two female teachers at a government-aided religious school in Kedah. Data that was transmitted in the form of a report was analyzed using the constant comparative method with the help of the Atlas ti 8 (Susanne, 2019) software. The main sub-theme and sub-themes can be generated and reported and among them is the FTA technique sub-theme, which will be discussed.

4. Findings

The results show that the FTA used by the study participants in grammar teaching were the singing technique, the poisonous box game technique, sentence fragmentation and sentence construction using clay (Farihah et al., 2018b). The view of the study participants in regards to FTA is that teachers need to be diligent in planning various teaching activities from various sources so that students are actively engaged and the teaching can be understood more easily.

In this teaching technique, the teacher must be diligent, in fact it all depends on the teacher... the teacher must be diligent in diversifying the technique. Teachers need to put effort, find out how to do it, so I teach our friends on the need to find out what techniques to do, is to do storytelling, is it to sing (GLAM1/16012018)

Teacher diligence in designing and planning a variety of activities to produce effective and fun teaching depends on the teacher. Therefore, teachers need to improve their knowledge and constantly plan various techniques to make their grammar teaching more comprehensible. The study participants reiterated that teachers need to be diligent during the interviews because there are many grammar topics in the textbook; nineteen topics in total. The following are examples of interviews excerpts of study participants;

There are just so many topics, it all depends on whether the teacher wants to put in effort or not, the teacher has to be diligent in diversifying their techniques so that the students will be happy (GLAM1/16012018/TB1).

Thus, during the course of the observation it appeared that the teachers brought with them tools for a poisonous box game such as a box and a radio. The activity began with the instructions or rules of the game from the teacher. When the students were ready, the teacher played music from the radio and the poisonous box moved from table to table. Finally, when the music from the radio was stopped, the student which was holding the box at the time would be the one to pick up a question from the box and answer the question and so on.

Based on the analysis results, among the FTA examples were language games, acting, singing, bad radio and quizzes. These techniques were the result of the

creativity and diligence of the teachers in seeking and digging knowledge to plan activities that will be implemented in the classroom. In addition, the benefits of applying FTA techniques include teaching that is more fun, easy to remember and easy to understand. This is because the teaching of grammar is theoretical and practical. Teachers need to make students more active and motivated in their activities.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

A motivating attitude towards students in order to enhance student creativity and activeness needs to be looked into and be given attention. Based on previous studies, a non-motivating attitude towards students will make them quiet and less communicative and it may affect student achievement in Arabic (Nik Mohd et al., 2008). Students are still weak in terms of language such as grammar, pronunciation and are unable to write proper sentences (Al-Muslim & Zamri, 2012). Therefore, teachers' confidence in their grammar teaching is important. The same is true of the methods used by teachers in the delivery of their content. Teachers need to diversify their methods and techniques in teaching Arabic (Zamri & Ibtisam, 2014).

The language games technique provides opportunities for teachers to present materials in more meaningful forms (Che Radiah & Norhayuza, 2016) and can make the teaching more enjoyable for students. The variety of techniques in teaching and learning has also provided the opportunity for students to develop their intellectual, spiritual, emotional, social and physical potentials as well as strengthening other newly learned skills (Noornajihan, 2015). One of the sub-themes of this study was the technique of singing with fingers. The singing technique chosen suited the school environment and facilities which were located in the rural area. The use of this singing technique can enhance students' memory especially in learning demonstratives (*isimisyarah*). *Isimisyarah* are demonstratives, or connecting words used in showing something. The singing technique will make it easier for students to memorize and remember the taught demonstratives. An example of an *isimisyarah* is

هذا هـذه، تلك ذلك، أولئك

The FTA technique is supported by previous studies as it can improve test scores and the percentage of passing students as well as enable them to understand and master the topic *al-mudari* verbs after learning it through the Language Game Method (Muhamad, 2009). Other studies suggest that teachers need to plan game activities that emphasize student brain exercise or brain training (MohdZohir et al., 2007). The FTA technique used in the teaching of grammar will ease it for students to master and memorize vocabulary in Arabic indirectly. Vocabulary is required to be memorized and mastered by students to build sentences in the teaching of grammar. This is supported by the authors of a previous study that stated that vocabulary among students was still inadequate (Harun, 2016).

Besides that, recent studies indicate that the level of Arabic proficiency among students is largely driven by factors such as learning between teachers, textbooks, teaching techniques, teaching aids and the environment. This is because the teaching and learning process is a process involving teacher-student interaction (Maimun et al., 2014). This is supported by the writing in the book *Quality of Arabic Language Teachers* explaining that an Arabic teacher needs to meet four categories, namely the personality category, the knowledge and credibility category, the student relationship category and the teaching category. The personality deemed as the thing that will make one a quality teacher and is agreed upon by teachers and students is diligent and confident nature. Meanwhile, good relationships with students mean caring for students, being friendly with students and being patient them (Al-Muslim & Zamri, 2019). This thus keeps up with theme derived from the context of this study. Therefore, the characteristics of a quality teacher include being skillful in diversifying their teaching techniques. The explanations and discussions in this study can be an added benefit to Arabic language teachers in particular.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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