

# The Integrative Teaching Problem of Arabic Morphosyntax

## Descriptive Analysis Study on Integrative Sharaf-Nahwu Teaching of Arabic Language

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**Abstract:** This study aims to discuss about the teaching problems of Arabic morphosyntax to avoid the mistakes experienced by the students lately. The focuses of this study are teaching planning, teaching process and the evaluation of teaching. The goal of this research is to describe these three variables comprehensively: the existing problems, the process of teaching in the classroom as solution, and the implementation of appropriate and comprehensive evaluation. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive analysis. The data in this study collected through a test, questionnaire, and observation. The results revealed that successful teaching activity is inseparable from careful and measurable planning, controlled implementation processes, and ongoing and periodic evaluations. The teaching planning model should include objective, materials, methods, tools/resources, and evaluation, while the model of teaching process should include the integration of morphology and syntax. Furthermore, the evaluation model should be in oral, as well as in written, also as formative and summative tests. Lastly, the tests should be an integration of *tashrif* memorization, its use in sentence formation, its use in dictionary and its contribution to the understanding of lexical and structural meaning.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

*Morphosyntax* is a new term which is derived from the combination of term *morphology* and *syntax*. Morphology deals with the study of word building, while syntax with sentence building. In Arabic language, morphology is known in term of *ilmu sharaf* and syntax as *ilmu nahwu*.

*Ilmu sharaf* is equivalent with morphology because it studies *morpheme*—the repeated tiniest form at several places but owns same meaning. For example, in Indonesian language, *me-* form exists at many words, like *menulis* (writing), *membaca* (reading), *menyembah* (worshipping) and many others, shows the same meaning which is ‘actively doing something’; *ber-* form in *berfikir* (thinking) and *bertanya* (asking) possess a meaning of ‘doing activity’; *-an* form in *hafalan* (recitation) and *bacaan* (reading) as ‘symbolizing a thing affected by an activity’; so that *ter-* and *me-* form, all of them are in different words with the same meaning, so called morpheme. Morpheme does not only

consist of prefixes and suffixes, but also includes root words like *baca* in different forms, such as *membaca*, *dibaca*, *terbaca*, *bacaan*, *pembaca*, and *bacalah*. The word *baca* in each word has same basic meaning, so it is considered as morpheme too. Indeed, root words differ from prefixes/suffixes as the former is called as *independent morpheme*, and the latter as *dependent morpheme*. So, according to that differentiation, the word *menulis* (write), *berfikir* (think), *terinjak* (being stepped on) and others are singular words which each word has two morphemes: *me-*, *ber-*, *ter-* as dependent morpheme and *tulis*, *fikir*, *injak* as independent morpheme (Chaer, 1984).

This concept is applied to languages, including Arabic, for example the sound of ت (ta) in the words تَدَّهَبُ , تَجْلِسُ , تَعْلَمُ , تَعْبُدُ , etc. is morpheme because even if it is at different places, it always has the same meaning, that is *you as a man or a woman*. For example, the sound of نون (uuna) in the words مَسْلُومُونَ , مُؤْمِنُونَ , حَاضِرُونَ , صَالِحُونَ , and so on has the same meaning, that is *many men*, so these are called

morphemes (Hasanain, 1984). Then, this *sharaf* science or morphology is basically about the base word and derivative words or word invented.

The *ilmu nahwu* is comparable with *syntax* because it similarly studies sentences' structure, which consists of constituents: subject, predicates, objects, complement, and adverb (Qaddur, 1996). Each of these constituents will be occupied by the word forms discussed in morphology. However, the choice of the word form is not arbitrary, because each constituent will demand a special form according to its context. For example, subject constituents can only be occupied by nouns, can not be occupied by verbs. Verbs can only occupy predicate constituents, can not occupy subject, object, or complement constituents. Similarly, other forms of words demand a certain position that is right for each of them.

Arabic morphosyntax includes the types of words based on gender dimension, number dimension, basic words and derived words that include *tashrif ishthilahi* (word derivation which produces certain meanings) and *tashrif lughawy* (word derivation which causes the change of action actors of verb or change of gender and number of noun word), *i'lal* (dealing with the letters  $\text{ء ا ؤ}$ ), *ibdal* (substitution of consonant or vowel), and *idgham* (integration of double consonant). The types of Arabic words are three, namely *ism* (noun), *fi'il* (verb), and *harf* (words that have no complete meaning without gathered with the other ones). The types of the *ism* words are seen in terms of their role, there are *ism jamid* (noun), *ism sifat* (adjective), *'adad* (number word), *ism dhamir* (pronoun), *ism isyarah* (point word), and *ism maushul* (conjunction word). Viewed from the gender dimension (sex), *ism* consists of *ism mudzakkar* (male form) and *ism muannats* (female form). Viewed in dimension of numbers, *ism* consists of *ism mufrad* (singular), *ism mutsanna* (double), *ism jama* (plural). These forms of *ism* arise because of structure of the sentence in Arabic must always be a *muthabaqah* (conformity) in terms of gender and numbers between subjects and predicate; even there is type of adverb, such as *hal* (state of action), its gender and number must be used according to the *shahibul hal* (someone/something having state of action: subject or object) (Ali, 2009).

The types of verb, seen in terms of their form, are *fi'l madhi* (past tense verb), *fi'l mudhari* (present tense verb), and *fi'il amr* (instruction future tense verb). These verb forms will undergo a change in the suffix, and there is even a prefix change for **past verb**, which is related to the gender and number of

the actors. That is because of the sentence's structure, especially regarding subject for the verb.

As for the *harf*, in Indonesian language it is equivalent to *kata tugas* (task word), because its words have no independent meaning except after undergoing a certain task in the structure of the sentence (Alwi, 2003). *Harf* which served as a preposition for an object called *harf jarr*, which served as a connector between the word called *harf 'athaf*, which served as a question sentence-shaping called *harf istifham*, which served to form a forbidding sentence called *harf nahi*, which served to negate the predicate called *harf nafi*, which served as a time statement called *harf zharfiyyah*, whose job is to make a verb as noun phrase called *harf mashdariyyah*, which in charge of strengthening the statement called *harf taukid*, and so forth.

The scope of *syntax* in Arabic includes phrase structure, sentence structure or clause, and *i'rab* (change of state of word end). A phrase is a combination of words that have no predicate relationship. The formation of phrase structure is closely related to the types of words of the three types of *ism* (noun), *fi'il* (verb), and *harf* (words that have no complete meaning without another words), both in dimension of gender and number.

Arabic sentence can be seen in dimension of form, can also be seen in dimension of meaning. According to form dimension, Arabic sentences consist of two types, namely *jumlah ismiyyah* (nominal sentence) and *jumlah fi'liyyah* (verbal sentence). On the nominal sentence, the subjects can be in front of or behind the predicate, while on the verbal sentence, the predicate is only in the form of *fi'il* (verb), and lies always after the subject. The difference between the two is that on *jumlah ismiyyah* (nominal sentence), the predicate may be the verb, adjective, noun, numeral word, and preposition phrase, while in *jumlah fi'liyyah* (verbal sentence) the predicate is only verb.

Viewed through dimension of meaning, Arabic sentences consist of *news sentences*, *inquiry sentences*, *prohibition sentences*, and *exclamation sentences*.

The types of Arabic phrase include the *idhafiy* (noun) phrase, which is the combination of nouns with nouns, the *washfiy* (adjective) phrase, which is the combination of nouns with the adjective, the *'adadiy* phrase, which is the combination of the number word with the noun, the *badaliy* phrase, which is the noun with the explanation, the phrase *taukidiy*, which is a combination of nouns with its affirmation, the phrase *'athfiy* which is the combination of nouns with nouns, or verbs with

verbs associated with the connector, the phrase *maushuliy*, which is the combination of conjunction words with the *shilah* (clause and preposition phrase), and the compound verb with objects and/or adverb (Ali, 2010).

Concerning the teaching of morphosyntax, Syahatah (1996) said- that the objective of Arabic morphosyntax teaching is to a) improve the style of language and avoid it (structural) errors that eliminate its aesthetics, so that by studying the rules students can understand the error on what he wrote and so quickly avoid it; b) enable students to think and know the more detailed differences between phrase structure and sentences; c) develop students' richness of language with the expressions and examples they are studying, which are around their environment and able to express their interest; d) organize the linguistic information of the students so that it is easy to use it, and they are able to criticize language styles and expressions with criticism that can clarify the complexities and causes of the ambiguities of the language styles; e) help students familiarize themselves with accurately observing, considering and making decisions, and generating a sense of literature in their souls, because among the functions of morphosyntax is to analyze expressions, idioms, and language styles (idioms), differ between the wrong expressions and language styles with the correct ones, maintaining the relationship between structure and meaning, and examine the changes that occur; f) train students to use expression and sentence structures correctly by knowing the characteristics of beautiful and easy Arabic sentences, for example they are trained that the Arabic sentences consist of *fi'l* (predicates) and *fa'il* (subjects) or *mubtada* (subjects) and *khabar* (predicates), and consists of several complement constituents, such as *maf'ul bih* (object), *hal* (state information), *tamyiz* (explanatory expression), and so on; g) establish correct language habits so as not to be influenced by the flow of slang language; and h) equip them with a number of Arabic structures, and make them gradually able to distinguish between the right one and the wrong one.

About the method of teaching rules (morphosyntax) of Arabic, Syahatah (1996) said that the method includes *thariqah qiyasiyah* (analogy method), *thariqah istiqraiyyah/istinbathiyah* (conclusion method), and *thariqah mu'addilah* (modifying method).

Regarding the model of teaching, Rusman (2012) put forward at length about this, which broadly includes the definition of teaching models, the basic considerations of choosing a teaching model,

teaching patterns, the characteristics of teaching models, and model-based teaching theories. This needs to be applied to the teaching process of Arabic morphosyntax.

Previous studies pertaining to morphosyntax generally deal only with student errors on the application of morphosyntax rules in Arabic text writing. One of them, in 1988, is Saripudin's research on errors of Arabic rules experienced by students majoring in Arabic Education IKIP Bandung in preparing the *insya* (essay). Recent research was conducted by Hamdani (2013) on morphosyntax errors in the thesis of students who have taken the end examination.

The research will be different with the author before, because this research is intended to overcome the same mistakes for students of the Department of Arabic Language Education, FPBS, UPI in the future, by doing treatment in the process of teaching with *Integrative Morphosyntax Teaching Model*, to grow inside students a paradigm that *sharaf* (morphology) and *nahwu* (syntax) must be integrated in the teaching process, because each other is interrelated, so it appears among *nahwu-sharaf* experts a statement: *sharaf* is a mother of science, while *nahwu* is its father. In order to children be born of the two sciences, both must be united in teaching.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODS

The research will be done by using qualitative approach. The method used in this research is descriptive analytic research. The instrument in this study is the researcher himself. Data collection techniques in this study include:

### 2.1 Test

This test is performed to assess students' ability in morphosyntax.

### 2.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaires will be used to find out the student's response to integrative morphosyntax learning process.

### 2.3 Observation

Observations will be made to observe various teaching-learning activities during applying integrative morphosyntax learning.

### 3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

To facilitate the presentation of findings and discussion, the following framework diagram of the results of this study is presented in figure 1.

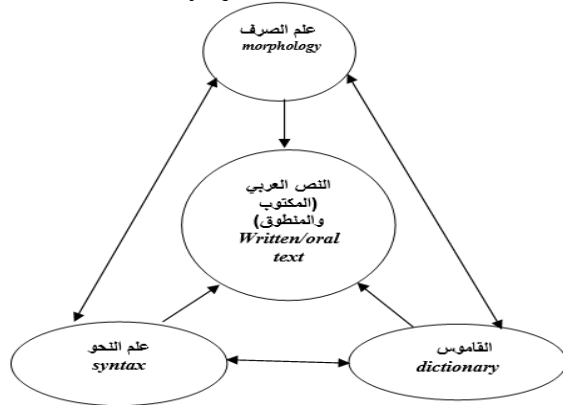


Figure 1: Framework diagram of the results of this study.

#### 3.1 Problems of Planning, Processing and Evaluation of Integrative Morphosyntax Teaching

Figure 1 is a reaction to the problematic teaching of morphosyntax which focuses too much on changing the shapes of words from one form to another, without being associated with their use in the formation of phrases and sentences to present or understand a discourse by the use of a dictionary. So from the planning, the process until the evaluation of morphosyntax learning should pay attention to the relationship between the elements of language listed on the chart above.

These findings and discussions focused on the learning elements of the three problematic variables, which consist of learning objectives, materials, methods, tools and resources, and evaluation.

##### 3.1.1 Teaching Objective

The problem of planning is that the objective of morphology teaching apart from the syntax in the former planning, is that the objective of morphology teaching only includes the objectives set forth in Arabic source books, namely:

عَلَّمَ يَعْرِفُ بِهِ تَحْوِيلَ الْأَصْلِ الْوَاحِدِ إِلَى أَمْثَلَةٍ  
مُخْتَلَفَةٍ لِمَعَانٍ مَقْصُودَةٍ

The objective of morphology test is to know the change of words from one form to another for the purpose of obtaining different meanings. For example: كَتَبَ (wrote), كَاتِبَ (writer), مَكْتُوبَ (written), كَاتَبَ (writing each other), and so on.

The achievement of such purpose only fulfills passive language mastering needs, such as reading text, but has not yet fulfilled the need to speak actively, such as composing a complete sentence with the appropriate choice of word form, and placing certain word categories on appropriate syntactic functions to convey a discourse.

As a solution to that deficiency, the goal of integrative morphosyntax teaching leads to the following general goals:

- To master and apply the principles and theories about the science of *sharaf* (morphology), especially in the field of patterns of Arabic words, in reading Arabic texts and composing Arabic sentences.
- To apply all the rules of the Arabic word derivation, both *tashrif ishthilahi* (word derivation which produces certain meaning) and *tashrif lughawy* (word derivation which causes the change of action actors of verb or change of gender and number of noun word) in using Arabic- Indonesian-Arabic dictionary to read and write Arabic text.
- To memorize all the patterns of Arabic word derivation, either groups of *tsulatsi mujarrad* (verbs of original three letters), *tsulatsiy maziid* (verbs of added three letters), *ruba'i mujarrad* (verbs of original four letters) and *ruba'i maziid* (verbs of added three letters).

The problem of the teaching process is that in teaching the morphology apart from the syntax, the teacher only teaches morphology in order to make students understand the shapes of words that undergo change, and understand the lexical meaning of them, but does not emphasize the effort to memorize them and not to teach their placement in the syntax functions accurately and the role of these forms in search for their meaning in dictionary. As a solution, the teaching of morphology is related to the syntax for applying each word form in composing phrases, sentences, and in searching the meaning of words in the dictionary to translate Arabic texts.

The problem of the evaluation system is that the objective of morphology teaching apart from the syntax is partial, only to understand the form without understanding how to use it in opening the dictionary and composing the sentence, so that the type of evaluation is only transforming a word from one form to several forms. The solution is to make an evaluation system that includes memorizing word patterns, using them in arranging phrases and



sentences, and using them in opening Arabic-Indonesian-Arabic dictionary.

### 3.1.2 Teaching Material

The problem of teaching planning is that the materials of the Arabic morphology separate from the syntax include only the table of *tashrif* (word derivation) which consist of *tashrif ishthilahi* (word derivation which produces certain meanings) and *tashrif lughawy* (word derivation which causes the change of action or change of gender and number of noun word) for *fi'il tsulatsi mujarrad* (trilateral verb), *fi'il tsulatsi mazid* (triple verb), *ruba'i mujarrad* (quadruple verb), *ruba'i mazid* (tetra more verb), *fi'il mut'addi* (transitive verb), *fi'il lajim* (intransitive verb), *fi'il mabny majhul* (passive voice verb) and *mabni maklum* (active voice verb). The solution is that these materials are complemented by their use in composing phrases and sentences and in searching for the meaning of words in Arabic-Indonesian-Arabic dictionaries.

The problem of the teaching process is that the table of Arabic word derivation is only introducing its form solely with its lexical meaning, less emphasizing the memorization of the forms, so that the students are difficult to apply them when reading the Arabic texts without vocal marks; also not explaining how to put every form of word that is contained in this derivation table in syntactic functions appropriately so that the wrong of placement often happen.

The special material, *fi'il bina majhul* (passive voice verb), often misapplied when translating passive sentence of English language containing *by phrase*, such as the sentence : *The book is read by Ali*, often translated to Arabic *الكتاب قرأ بعلي*. The correct one: *الكتاب قرأه علي*

As a solution, the materials were perfected by the creation of a simple *tashrif* (word derivation) table with 22 chapters, which had previously exceeded that number, then every form of the word pattern on the table was taught how to use it in composing sentences, and how to use it in opening a dictionary to search for the meaning of words in the text which are not written in the dictionary.

Especially for the form of *fi'il bina majhul* (passive voice verb), this material is taught about its use in making passive sentence that does not contain *by phrase*, while for passive sentence containing *by phrase*, it is expressed by the form of construct with arrangement: subject (S) and predicate (P) consisting of verb (V), object (O), and actors of action of verb, such as *الكتاب قرأه علي* (الكتاب = Subject (S) + قرأه

علي = Predicate (P) consisting of verb (V) قرأ + ه = object (O) + علي = actor of action.

The problem of evaluation, is that the evaluation of morphology materials that separated from the syntax is only testing the ability to understand the form of words and their changes only. The solution is that the evaluation of the material includes memorizing a form of word, and its use in composing sentences and phrases, and in opening a dictionary for translating Arabic texts.

### 3.1.3 Teaching Methods

The method of teaching morphology that is separate from syntax, more emphasizes on lectures to understand the form of words and their changes, without being linked to their role in the language use as a whole. As a solution, the lecture method is used to present the theory, then the method of discussion in the classroom and outside is increased, as well as the method of giving assignment for each student is applied. This is in reaction to the dominant lecture method, and less emphasizing on individual tasks that are carefully corrected by the teacher.

### 3.1.4 Teaching Tools and References

Regarding tools and references on morphology teaching apart from syntax, there are only blackboard and Arabic morphology textbooks that speak only words and their changes in form. As a solution, maximized the use of LCDs to display a table of word derivation and examples of its use for composing Arabic sentences, and maximized Arabic-Indonesian-Arabic dictionary, such as *Al-Munawwir's* (Arabic-Indonesian) dictionary by Munawwir, A.W. (1997) and dictionary of Indonesian-Arabic by Al-Kalali, A.M. (1993) to exercise the use of word derivation tables in translating Arabic and Indonesian texts, as well as used al-Qur'anic texts and others as training texts. Sources of reading material, in addition to the Arabic books of *Nahwu* (syntax) and *Sharaf* (morphology), also compiled a book that presents integrative morphosyntax teaching.

### 3.1.5 Evaluation

Regarding the evaluation, designed oral and written tests, conducted formatively and summarily, and compiled a comprehensive test covering the memorization of basic patterns of word and the use of these basic patterns to compose phrases and sentences and to use Arabic-Indonesian-Arabic dictionaries. This is done in reaction to the planning,

process and evaluation of morphology teaching that stand apart from the syntax, which only emphasizes the written test of memorization about the basic patterns of the Arabic words and their changes, without testing their use for composing Arabic sentences and using those basic patterns to search for the meaning of words in the dictionary.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The success of an activity is inseparable from careful and measurable planning, controlled implementation processes, and ongoing and periodic evaluations. Similarly, the success of teaching activities will be achieved if planned well and measurably in advance, if the teaching process steps were carried out regularly, systematically, and maximally, and if constantly evaluated as a control, as well as regularly evaluated in the middle and end of the program activities to assess the success of the implementation process from planning to implementation.

In the context of integrative teaching on morphosyntax of Arabic language, and based on the description, analysis and discussion of data on planning, implementation, and on the type and form of its evaluation, it can be concluded that the integrative teaching process of Arabic morphosyntax is a reaction to the freezing of traditional teaching model of Arabic morphology and syntax which done separately sharply. So it takes a long time to bring together both functions in translating an Arabic text and in composing new text both orally and in writing.

For the beginner learners, teaching Arabic morphology that emphasizes only the introduction of derivation of word forms without drilling how to use it in composing a phrase and sentence, can confuse them when faced with reading and writing the Arabic text to express their ideas and feelings in Arabic. While reading the Arabic language text, they have trouble opening an Arabic-Indonesian-Arabic dictionary to search for the meaning of strange new words. While writing and expressing orally, they are difficult to choose which forms and types of words and terms are appropriate for use in the syntactic functions they use in accordance with the rules of syntax they have ever studied. The absence of meeting point between the Arabic morphology and syntax can cause their difficulties to master Arabic as a whole, either in listening, speaking, reading, or writing skills.

On the basis of all above, the models of planning, process, and evaluation of teaching Arabic morphosyntax are made integrative, in the sense that attempting to plan, teach, and evaluate the teaching of word derivation with the whole process of change from the base word into a word invented in the morphology, has to be applied simultaneously in arranging phrases and clauses, as taught in the science of *nahwu* (Arabic syntax), that make it easier for students to use the two sciences (morphology and syntax) in understanding and composing Arabic text, both oral and written.

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