

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, THE FRAME OF LEARNING ISLAMIC STUDIES TOWARDS ISLAMIC RELIGION TEACHERS BILINGUALLY

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ABSTRACT

Unity in Diversity as Indonesian motto turns into a saying which unifies the nation. Indonesia proudly presents many islands, races, ethnic groups, cultures, and also traditional languages. This symbolizes multiculturalism that has survived in the motherland.

Generally, an Indonesian applies traditional and Indonesian languages in daily life and learns English at school or course. Some have practiced other foreign languages such as Arabic as well since it becomes the language of Al-Qur'an. However, English is usually taught as the compulsory subject in every level of disciplines. English belongs to any states of the world.

In learning Islam, human being needs to learn and use English. Most references of Islamic studies are written particularly in Arabic and globally in English. Dealing with this issue, a teacher, in this case an Islamic religion teacher as a figure who educates students, should learn Islamic terms in bilingual versions beside his/her own competence.

The teacher is expected to have not only multi-skills but also multicultural education. Having diverse students from multiethnic society probably occurs. Afterward, multicultural education nowadays is being a part of the school curriculum and made a compulsory school subject. It offers the prospect for both the teacher and students to learn inclusion materials that contain fundamental principles, such as democracy, humanism, and pluralism or inclusive religious values.

All of those principles could be handed in Islamic Education Material Development Based Multicultural in order to build an inclusive religion at school. The materials are as follows (Salamah, 2011): First, the material of the Koran, in determining the choice of verses. Second, the jurisprudence material, can be extended to study fiqh siyasa (government). Third, the material character of the studies focus on the good-bad behavior against God, Apostle, fellow humans, ourselves, as well as the environment, critical to laying the foundations of nationhood. Lastly, SKI material, material that is rooted in historical fact and reality.

Furthermore, a kind of TV program is also possibly to be a medium to introduce multicultural education to children. They as one of cartoon mania on TV, for instance, know how to enjoy watching their favorite cartoon series (Upin & Ipin) while unconsciously learning the multicultural education in their early ages. Otherwise, Darwis Dance (collaboration of a Turkish dance and Javanese Gamelans) grows to be one more alternative approach in learning Islam and multicultural education.

Keywords: *Multicultural education, Islamic Religion Teachers, Bilingual Islamic Studies*

A. Introduction

Indonesia is internationally well-known as a country which has big population (the third in the world) and the biggest Muslim nation. Though its citizens perchance choose six legal religions (Islam, Christian, Catholic, Buddish, Hindi, and Confucius). It has been noted having 85.2% or 199.959.285 million Muslim (www.wikipedia.org)

Positively, Asia could see Indonesia from its national foundation and symbol. “Pancasila” has five national foundations which the third mentions Indonesian unity. In addition, “Garuda” is declared as the national symbol. This figures a bird which represents Indonesia’s Independence Day in Seventeen August 1945. The Garuda holds a ribbon labeled “Bhineka Tunggal Ikha”. This motto stands for *Berbeda-beda tetapi Tetap Satu Juga* (Unity in Diversity). That stated above shows ‘Unity’. It represents multiculturalism that has existed in Indonesia.

For the shake of this word, Indonesia consists of many islands, races, ethnic groups, religions (like uttered above), cultures, and also traditional languages. Indonesian is so proud of being different. Accordingly, Indonesian language is used as the first language along with the mission of unifying the nation. While

English is stated as its foreign language.

Commonly, an Indonesian applies traditional and Indonesian languages in daily life and learns English at school or course. Some practice other foreign languages such as Arabic, French, Japan, Korean, etc., as well. However, English is taught as the compulsory subject in every level of disciplines. So does in learning Islam. He/she needs to use English. Most references of Islamic studies are not only written in Arabic but also in English. In English, Arabic, or another language subject, there are four language competences is obliged to be taught. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing competences. Teachers or lecturers bring them together into one or two language subjects though Language Departments of universities present them separately such as in Islamic Religious Education Department.

In this department, English and Arabic languages turn out to be general lectures. The four language competences are taught to the students through one or two subjects. On the contrary, the needs of practicing the languages due to their sense of duty as the candidate of Islamic Religion teachers ask them to learn more out of their formal institutions. Either through learning in a course, joining in the organization of language, or simply reading books and practicing with friends.

In addition, a teacher possibly will teach against diversity of students who are from diverse race, culture, ethnic group, abilities, social-economic status, vernacular, and so forth. Consequently, he or she is expected to have not only multi-skills but also multicultural education. It represents how crucial the multicultural education is. This paper is constructed to bring multicultural education in accordance with Learning Islamic Studies towards Islamic Teachers through Bilingual Languages.

B. What Multiculturalism stands for?

After we imagine and truly look at the reality how many diversity in Indonesia is and also decide that it is included into multicultural country, let us realize what multiculturalism is and when it begins. Multiculturalism is the antonym of monoculturalism. Tilaar, (2004) identifies it based on etymologist term. Multiculturalism comes from the words *multi* (a lot), *culture* (traditions), and *ism* (paham/aliran). The concept which came out first in Canada indicates an admission of the existence of various cultures.

The existence of multiculture of course usually causes some cultures that dominate between the minor cultures. This is especially vulnerable to the presence of discrimination. Furthermore, Parsudi (2010) in <http://www>.

interseksi.org mentions that the concept of discrimination is actually only used to refer to the actions and harms of different treatments for different ascriptive them by the dominant group. Those which include ascriptive social groups are ethnic groups (including races, ethnic culture and religious beliefs), gender or sex, and age. Various acts of discrimination against those who belong to minorities, or forced to change their way of life and culture belonging to minorities (or assimilation) is a life patterns prevailing in a pluralistic society. Criticism or opposition to the two common patterns made by dominant groups against minorities often do not work, because the dominant group has excess power and can impose their will either be rough with the military and or police force or by using the rule of law and the various ways that the traffic social and cultural sense for their interests are dominant.

Still as stated by Parsudi, the best solution is changing pluralistic society to be multicultural society, by adopting multiculturalism as an ideology of life and beliefs of Indonesia to be applied in the life of the nation of Indonesia. He instills multiculturalism as an ideology that emphasizes the equality of admission and appreciation of cultural difference. Included in the definition of culture is a culture of advocates, both individually and in groups, especially goes to ascriptive social class such as the ethnic (and races), gender, and age. Ideology of multiculturalism is a mutually supportive hand in hand with processes of democratization, which essentially the equality of individual actors (Human Rights) is dealing with the authority and the community or the local society.

In line with Parsudi, Mahfud, (2006:xix) expresses multiculturalism as a concept that emphasizes on equality and equality of local cultures without ignoring the rights and existence of other cultures. Yet, he (2006:99) argues that plural society is not always multicultural society, as it may possible relate in between strength of the community in cultural variants that are not symmetrical that always present in the form of domination, hegemony, and contestation. Thus, there should be a sense of balance linking each. Awareness, sincere tolerance and harmony became the foundation of many of the culture itself.

C. Multiculturalism in Indonesia

The phenomenon of multiculturalism in Indonesia came in the beginning of Independence day to the *Orde Baru* Period lead by Soeharto that tent to monoculturalism due to stability of nation. However, this wipes out local cultural geniuses that initially influenced all traditions and socio-cultural system.

A revolution starts to present when reformation era came in 1998. After a ethnic and religious conflict occurred in 1996 and reformed the system, Indonesia and its stake-holders transform monoculturalism to multiculturalism. Indonesia that is always familiar with its enormous cultures, ethnics, languages and more perfectly harmonized applies multiculturalism. Like states by Parekh (1997:167) “just as society with several religions or languages is multi religious or multi lingual, a society containing several cultures is multicultural. The existence of multiculturalism needs some concepts as this ideology does not grow single-handedly. The concepts are supported as a basic knowledge to be aware of it. Those relevant concepts are such as: democracy, justice and law, cultural values and ethos, unity in diversity, race, culture, ethnicity, religious beliefs, cultural expressions, private and public domains, Human Rights, cultural rights community, etc. (Suparlan, 2002:12). Likewise, Yaqin (2005:5), adds that multicultural generation means a generation who appreciates in diversity, always stands on democracy, justice and humanity.

All of the concepts are available in multicultural education. When Indonesian teachers would like to apply multicultural education in three big portions cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, they must say no for discrimination and yes for inclusiveness.

Sugiharto (2009) adds that those are acquired through knowledge in multicultural education. As part of its concerns about the real threat against pluralism, education practitioners once proposed that multicultural education be part of the school curriculum and be made a compulsory school subject.

When effectively implemented in a multiethnic society like ours, multicultural education provides the opportunity for young and adult learners to learn fundamental principles that help them critically evaluate and respond to what they see and experience as they live in a culturally heterogeneous society. These principles include learning for the acquisition of social skills important for interacting with students from other racial, ethnic, religious and cultural groups; learning to understand universal values shared by all cultural groups such as compassion, justice, equality, tolerance, peace, freedom and care; learning about possible stereotypes and other related bias that could produce deleterious effects on racial, ethnic and religious relations. In practice, teachers can, for example, assign students with meaningful tasks such as a case study, problem-solving approach and discovery learning, which will help students demonstrate universal values shared by other religious and ethnic groups, and critically analyze, weigh and evaluate prejudices.

Implications for the development of multicultural education are inclusion

materials containing ideas of various cultural groups. Education does not only teach its own cultural values, but it also teaches a perspective and other culture in other region around the world. This can make the students having ‘cultural literacy’ (*melők huruf*) that is able to see various cultural viewpoints that have ever lived in various parts of the world. Here are the Tenets of Development of Multicultural Education in Indonesia (Kurniadi, 2010:3-4):

1. The addition of multicultural materials
2. An autonomous field of study or subjects
3. A program and planned practices
4. At school area, Multicultural Education means (a) a curriculum-related work experience ethnic, multicultural experience program, and total school reform.
5. Movement of equality
6. Process

Besides, there are some principles of Multicultural Education in Indonesia:

1. The principles of the national insights/nationality. This principle is based on the concept of nationalism/nationality.
2. The principle of *Bhineka Tunggal Ikha* (Unity in Diversity). This concept emphasizes the cultural diversity that converges in our territory.
3. The principle of equality. Indonesia respects to this principle. All cultures are seen, recognized, and developed in equality.
4. The principle of harmonious, congenial, and balanced. All cultures were developed in line with the development of each.

Globally, three principles of Program Development in Multicultural Education are:

1. Multicultural education is based on a new pedagogy that is equity pedagogy.
2. Multicultural education is aimed at the realization of a civilized human being.
3. The principle of cultural globalization.

D. Multicultural Education in line with Bilingual Islamic Studies

The development of multicultural education seems inviting Islam to insert the same thing Islam to learn its knowledge. Essentially, Islam teaches its followers not to discriminate and give the same rights to anyone regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, and so on. Allah SWT never discriminates His people

because only the levels of piety of men that makes them different.

In *UU Sisdiknas* that clarifies in UUD 1945, it enlightens the essence of balance in increasing piety of faith. It says in the function and objective of national education (Article 3),” National education functionates to develop skills and form the character and civilization of the nation’s dignity in the context of the nation’s intellectual life of the nation, and aims at developing students’ potential to become a man of faith and fear of Allah, the Almighty, as well as noble, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become citizens of a democratic and responsible. In accordance with this article, Mul Khan (2006:257) argues that religious piety practice will sharpen sensibilities of humanity when it is carried out based on a unique local experience of each religion. The political parties, religious movements, and educational institutions can perform its educative function to build social citizens and citizens of the nation’s uniqueness to live with one another.

In multicultural education, a teacher or lecturer is not only required to master and be able to professionally teach subjects or courses that are taught. Moreover, an educator must also be able to instill the core values of multicultural education such as democracy, humanism, and pluralism or instill religious values in students that are inclusive. In turn, the out-put resulting from school / university is not only competent in accordance with the practiced disciplines, but also able to apply religious values to understand and appreciate the existence of other faiths and beliefs (Salamah, 2011 in <http://www.ft.sunan-ampel.ac.id>). Accordingly, he/she should practice his/her skills, and collaborate with those core values of multicultural education includes spiritual lesson to students and institutions.

Multicultural life also a miracle for human living. Allah SWT through Al-Qur’anul Karim said that He creates difference (each people) pleasantly and allows competitions for goodness, but dislike debates. This contributes in Surah Al-Maidah (5):48 “And We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. To each of you We prescribed a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion], but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together, and He will [then] inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.

Multicultural education bestows humans’ praises for all blessings that have

been received. This also be cultural learning exercise for learners to be closer to their Merciful Creator. “Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], “Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. (Surah Ali Imran (3):191). Furthermore, the cultural learning exercise is available in the Islamic Religious Education material development based multicultural (Salamah, 2011 in <http://www.ft.sunan-ampel.ac.id>), as follows:

In order to build an inclusive religion in the schools there are several Islamic religious education materials that can be developed by teachers, especially teachers of Islamic religious education to the multicultural feel of, among others: First, the material of the Koran, in determining the choice of verses, but the verses on faith also needs to be supplemented with the verses that can provide understanding and attitudes forming when interact with people of different religions, as early as possible so that students could develop tolerant and inclusive manners, such as a) materials related to the recognition of the Qur’an that there is plurality and race in goodness (Al-Baqarah/2:148); b) The material related to the recognition of peaceful coexistence in the relations between human religion (Al-Mumtahanah/60:8-9); c) materials related to justice and equality (An-Nisa’/4:135).

Second, the jurisprudence material can be extended to study *fiqh siyasa* (government). It contains the concepts of nationhood has been exemplified in the time of the Prophet, or the Friends of the caliphs after. At the time of the Prophet, for example, how the Prophet Muhammad managed and led the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious people of Medina. The state of the Medina at that time was not much different from the people of Indonesia, which is also multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious.

Third, the material character of the studies focus on the good-bad behavior against God, Apostle, fellow humans, ourselves, as well as the environment, critical to lay the foundations of nationhood. Therefore, the permanence of a nation depends on morality, when it underestimated the character of a nation, the nation will disappear. The Al-Qur’an has been told about the destruction of the people of Luth, caused the breakdown of moral foundations. In order for this multi-cultural nuances of Religious Education can be effective; the role of Islamic religious teachers was very decisive. In addition, they have to always develop varied and not monotonous teaching methods and provide exemplary.

Fourth, *SKI* material, material that is rooted in historical fact and reality can be exemplified by the practices of social interaction that is applied by

Prophet Muhammad when he built the community in Medina. Historically, in the development process of Medina, is discovered the facts about the recognition and appreciation for the values of pluralism and tolerance by the Prophet Muhammad.

The expansion above can be learnt all around the world intensely all the way through two languages, Arabic and English. A good number of Islamic literatures are written in Arabic and English. The most reasonable reason is because Arabic is the language of Al-Qur'an, the guidance of mankind. Secondly, English is the most understandable language in the world (as stated as international language).

Learning Islamic Studies, multicultural education, and anything are trouble-free through mastering the languages. Many Islamic and general schools or places apply bilingual learning (read; Arabic and English. Islamic studies in Britain's higher education institutions are failing to meet the needs of a 21st-century multicultural society, according to a report published today. Academics at Dundee's Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies examined 55 UK higher education departments and centres currently offering courses in the study of Islam and Muslims. They claim education structures are "letting down" Muslims and are calling for a "new agenda" offering education which is more relevant to contemporary British society and takes a more multicultural approach(Press Association Wednesday October 25, 2006,Guardian Unlimited).

Next in May 2010, five young Muslim leaders from Australia under the Australia-Indonesia Institute (AII) Muslim Exchange Program between March-June 2010 made a reciprocal visit to Indonesia to learn firsthand about Indonesia's diverse, democratic and tolerant society and to meet community, education and religious leaders, academics, government officials and media representatives. (Davis, Sanchi (Cultural Attaché) in <http://www.indonesia.embassy.gov.au>)

Then, there is no other reason for Islamic Religious Education teachers (even all Muslim teachers) not to start introducing Islamic Studies into bilingual versions (Arabic and English). And for parents, there have been media and multimedia in the market and internet to learn Islamic terms for themselves and to teach them for their generations. Since young generation begins to learn something for the very first time through family.

E. Multicultural education through Kids Cartoon Series

Actually, multicultural education could be learnt by anyone in any age.

After it is given at school and some formal institutions, the multicultural education may be handed over through indirect media so that public do not have to come on those places and may be facilitated anywhere. The mass media are now available almost in anywhere such as internet, radio, and television (TV).

The virtue of watching TV seems supporting the way to learn multicultural education for TV's mania. Children, as one of TV's consumers have possibly enjoyed watching their favorite cartoon series (Upin & Ipin) since these turn to be media to learn multicultural education in their early ages. Even grown-up gets pleasure from them as well.



Upin & Ipin is an animated children's movie that was released in Malaysia on 14 September 2007 and broadcast on TV9 in series. The series were produced by Les' Copaque. Firstly, the series were proposed to kids to live up Ramadhan Month. They asked to bring children in the spirit of Ramadhan. Then in Indonesia, Upin & Ipin, the series are broadcast by MNCTV around 5-7 minutes each episode at 7.00 pm. Upin & Ipin are five-year-old twin brothers that live in Kampung Durian with Kak Ros and Opah (their older sister and grandmother). As they have been orphans since they were babies. They go to school at Tadika Mesra Kindergarten where they meet a lot of friends that have various manners, cultures, ethics, and religions. Mei-mei is a cute and clever Chinese girl who comes from Confucius family but reminds her friends who do not fast in Ramadhan Month, Jarjit Singh is a Hindi boy who likes to make jokes and rhymes, Ehsan is arrogant, fussy and like to eat, Fizi (Ehsan's cousin) is full of confidence but quite ridicule others, and Ma'il that is enabled to sell, dreamy and sleepy because of selling chicken overnight. (<http://www.densetyo.blogspot.com>)

The series are created in order to invite public; especially children to be aware of differences surrounded us through film. The multi-cultures, behaviors,

ethics, and religions bring us into informal multicultural education. Besides, children who like watching cartoon film are able to learn multiculturalism in order to be applied into their everyday life. By watching film series like Upin & Ipin, they may have multi-knowledge, such as multicultural education and islamic terms. As represented in some of their episode entitled *Esok Puasa*, *Ramadhan Kembali Lagi*, *Taraweeh*, *Lailatul Qadr*, *Kuih untuk Opah*, *Hari Raya*, etc.

F. Darwis Dance as Multicultural Art Education

Again, multicultural education may be learnt through an art. Darwis dance presents as a kind of art which collaborates Javanese Gamelans instrument and a Turkish dance. M. D. Shahab (through Islam Nusantara Program in Kompas TV broadcasted by TvB, Semarang) utters that Darwis Dance comes from Sufism art in Turk that is modified in Indonesia through the melodious Gamelans instrument which is so closed to Javanese people in order to introduce Islam and invite them to keep God in mind.

Formerly, Darwis Dance originates from Keraton Village in Pekalongan Town, Central Java. The creator is Muhammad D. Shahab, the leader of Muslim multicultural art. He has transformed the Sufis Turkish dance as the regular movement. Since the white costume of the dancers symbolizes *kaffan* cloth which covers Muslims' bodies when they die. Additionally, black *peci* means *nissan* of grave. with Tunefully, he chooses Gamelans approximating the way of *Walis* in Java spread Islam Religion to Hindu that typically brings into line with these pieces of musical equipments and praised rhymes (*puji-pujian*) to God. Before all gamelan players and dancers take part in the Darwis Dance, they do a ritual zikir to make them more focused and remind them to Allah, the Al-Mighty. Somebody assumes that the Darwis dancers who always spin around discordant with the movement of clock are insensible (*kesurupan*). Truly, they are more mindful as they think of God further.

Learning how to dance or play Gamelans in Darwis Dance grows to be one of alternatives in learning multicultural education. The partnership between Indonesian musical instrument and a Turkish dance through Darwis Dance demonstrates how Muslims invent one more approach to do *da'wah* for Islam. Again, all of the personnel require learning multi-languages and multi-disciplines to do it.

G. Closing

In Indonesia, learning Islamic studies are mostly still in one direction or use one (Arabic) language only and do not use bilingual (if they apply them bilingually, the languages are in Arabic and Indonesian (mother-tongue). Even some get them through Indonesian simply because they are not able to read Al-Qur'an in Arabic. Hence, they read and learn Islam within Al-Qur'an by reading the Indonesian version.

Al-Qur'an published in Indonesia is the first best guidance book to learn Islamic studies. We could compare Indonesian and Arabic. However, it is going to be better if we learn Arabic and English as foreign languages (as Islamic literatures of the world are written in both). Lastly, Learning Islamic Studies by applying bilingual languages (Arabic and English) is good, and trilingual or more languages are better.

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