

The Arabic Language As A Basic Epistem In The Scientific Tradition Of Islamic Boarding School Education

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Abstract.

The yellow book (kitab kuning) is the basic curriculum in Islamic boarding school education. He uses Arabic as an instrument of presentation. So, the educational process of pesantren is definitely in contact with Arabic as an episteme in its scientific building. This study aims to describe the Arabic language as a fundamental epistem in Islamic boarding school education and its relation to the scientific construction of Islamic boarding schools based on it. This research is a qualitative research with the type of literature study. This study uses data collection methods in the form of documentation of all libraries related to Islamic boarding schools and the Arabic language. Then, the data analysis used is descriptive analysis and content analysis. In testing the validity of the data, the researcher used triangulation, namely source triangulation, method triangulation, peer discussion and member check. The results of this study are: 1) The episteme of the pesantren scientific tradition is the Bayani epistem which is based on Arabic in aqidah and shari'ah Islamiyah. 2) Arabic that is learned in Islamic boarding school education begins with theoretical Arabic which is oriented to the practice of reading the yellow book as the basic curriculum in Islamic boarding school learning.

Keywords: Arabic Language, Epistem and Islamic Boarding School Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a basic and important need for humans, because language is a medium for conveying ideas, ideas, and human thoughts in the form of speech or writing with the intention of being understood by others. Language is the main tool that plays an important role in human life such as conveying messages, communication media and others.¹ Along with the passage of time in human life, the variety of languages is increasing, including Arabic, English, Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, and others. Among the world's languages, Arabic is the oldest and longest spoken language in the world. Pesantren as an educational institution has a main character, namely as an educational institution that has distinctive characteristics, because, pesantren has a scientific tradition that is different from the scientific tradition of other educational institutions, such as madrasas or schools.² One of the main characteristics of pesantren as a differentiator from other educational institutions is the teaching of the yellow book, classical Islamic books written in Arabic, both written by Arab Muslim leaders and Indonesian Muslim thinkers.³ Arabic as a medium used in the yellow book to present the ijihad ideas of the scholars about Islamic teachings is a study that must be studied by students starting from the grammatical theories of Arabic and in turn the ability to read the yellow book and take understanding from it. In this aspect, Pondok Pesantren emphasizes the importance of the aspects of qawa'id and qira'ah which are applied to the ability to read the yellow book rather than the ability to speak Arabic which is oriented to the verbal ability of students in Arabic communication.

As for the situation, the vision and mission of the Islamic Boarding School are aligned with the religious mission by focusing the study of Arabic as a medium in understanding the Qur'an, Hadith and turats books. So that the allocation of time for learning Arabic in Islamic boarding schools becomes more dominant compared to other scientific studies. The dominance of the study of Arabic in Islamic boarding schools causes the sanctity of the students to the study of Arabic, so that a paradigm of thinking emerges for the

students which states that the Islamic Boarding School cannot run according to its function if there is no Arabic language study in it. This is in line with the opinion of Ramadhan Abdul-Tawwab which states that if there is no al-Qur'an, then there is no Arabic language, and if there is no Arabic it is difficult to understand the Qur'an and Islam. Islamic boarding schools cultivate a culture of studying turats books originating from the middle east as the main reference in studying and studying Islam. It's just that there are various difficulties for the students due to the high content and structure of Arabic sentences and the students are only directed at the ability to understand language rules and translate, while the language aspect as an oral communication tool is not implemented. This pattern emphasizes the study of Islamic studies from classical literature.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic Boarding School Education Epistem

Etymologically, the word epistemology comes from the Greek episteme which means knowledge (knowledge) and logos which means the study of or theory. So, literally epistemology means the study or theory of knowledge (the study of or theory of knowledge). However, in philosophical discourse, epistemology is a branch of philosophy that discusses the origin, structure, methods, and truth of knowledge.⁴ In addition, it can also be said that epistemology is a branch of philosophy that specifically discusses the theory of knowledge.⁵ Initially, the discussion in epistemology focused more on the origin of knowledge and the theory of truth. The first discussion stems from the question of whether knowledge comes from the mind alone (rationalism), the senses (empiricism) or intuition. Meanwhile, the second focuses on the question of whether the "truth" of knowledge can be described by correspondence, coherence, or pragmatic patterns. Talking about the epistemology of Islamic education, according to al-Jabiri, the epistemology of Islamic knowledge is based on three aspects, namely the epistemology of *bayani*, *irfani* and *burhani*.⁶ However, in pesantren education, the Bayani epistem is the basic epistem of the overall scientific construction in it.

Bayani is an epistemology that includes disciplines originating from Arabic, namely *nahwu*, *fiqh*, *usul fiqh*, *kalam* and *balaghah*. Each of these disciplines is formed from a unified system of language that binds the bases of reasoning. This epistemology can be understood from three aspects, namely in terms of knowledge activities, knowledge discourse and knowledge systems. As a knowledge activity, *bayani* means "seeing" and "understanding", as a knowledge discourse, *bayani* means the world of knowledge formed by the pure Islamic Arab world, namely linguistics and religion. Meanwhile, as a knowledge system, *bayani* means a collection of principles, concepts and efforts that cause the world to form without being based on.⁷ Historically, *bayani* activities have started since the emergence of Islamic influence, but have not yet been scientific studies such as scientific identification and laying rules for interpreting texts. The next stage is the emergence of the rules for interpreting the *bayani* discourse. The process of laying the rules of *bayani* interpretation is carried out by Imam al-Syafi'i. According to Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, al-Syafi'i's contribution is very important, especially regarding his positioning of the *as-sunnah* as the second *nash* (text). The *nash* is sourced as *mushahhari* (law determination). In line with that, the explanation of al-jabiri in *naq'du al-aql al-arabi*⁸:

و إذا نحن عدنا إلى هذه النظرية البيانية في المعرفة، التي تبلورت إول الأمر كقوانين لتفسير الخطاب المبين مع الشافعي، ثم بعد ذلك كقواعد و توجيهات لإنتاج ذات الخطاب مع الجاحظ، ثم كطريقة في اكتساب المعرفة و تصنيفها من حيث درجة اليقين فيها مع ابن وهب و غيرها. إذا نحن عدنا إلى هذه النظرية و بحثها فيها منذ ميلادها الرسمي حتى اكتمال نموها و نضجها عن المفاهيم الأساسية التي تأسس المنهج و الرؤية داخلها وجدنا أنفسنا أمام أزواج من المفاهيم تستقطب النشاط الفكري حولها و تشكل العناصر الرئيسية في بنيتها العامة. هذه الأزواج هي: اللفظ-المعنى، الأصل-الفرع، الخبر-القياس.

From that, it was explained that Al-Syafi'i succeeded in standardizing ways of thinking concerning the relationship between pronunciation and meaning as well as the relationship between language and the text of the Qur'an, he also succeeded in formulating the rules of the Arabic language as reference for interpreting the Qur'an. He made the Qur'an, Hadith, *Ijma'* and *Qiyas* as valid sources of reasoning to answer questions in society. For him to think within the framework of *nash* in *bayani* there are two fundamental dimensions, namely *ushul* (primary principles) from which emerge secondary principles (*far'*). Then, al-Jahiz tried to develop *bayani* not only limited to "understanding" as al-Syafi'i did, but making the listener or reader understand the discourse. He even went further, that is to make the listener understand, calm the listener and finish the debate, and make the interlocutor unable to talk anymore, then Ibn Wahab tried to systematize it by reformulating the *bayani* theory as a method and system of gaining knowledge.⁹

Arabic Language

Arabic is one of the languages that is unique with its complex phonetics, syntax and morphology, making it special compared to other world languages. Among the special features of the Arabic language are: 1) a language rich in vocabulary, 2) a language that has a complete structural analysis (*i'rab*), 3) a language that has a unique word formation system (morphology), 4) a flexible and dynamic language, 4) a language that has a refined language style (*balaghah*). This privilege is one of the reasons why Arabic is a must to learn, both for identity purposes and for communication purposes. The development of Arabic language studies in facing these goals contains language competence which is the main prerequisite in mastering a language both in language acquisition and in language learning. The meaning of "Arab" in language is the Sahara desert, or a barren land in which there is no water and trees grow on it. whereas "language" is a communication tool that humans use to interact with each other and relate to various motivations and needs that they have. Arabic is the language used by a group of people who reside in the Sahara Desert, the Arabian Peninsula. Arabic is a Semitic language in the Afro-Asiatic language group and is related to Hebrew and Neo Aramaic languages that have been used in the Arabian Peninsula for centuries. Arabic has more speakers than any other language in the Semitic language group. Now the Arabic language is widely used in this world. It is spoken as a first language by more than 280 million people, most of whom live in the Middle East and North Africa.

Arabic is also the language of worship in the Islamic religion because it is the language used by the Qur'an, that is "indeed we have made the Qur'an in Arabic, so that you can understand it". Regarding the emergence of the language for the first time in the Semitic language, language researchers have different opinions, but there is a theory that is the strongest that is believed by Arabic linguists, among them Abdul Wahid Wafi and Emil Badi Ya'qub and orientalist is that the Arabic language is a Semitic language and is the language closest to the parent Semitic language, because Arabic has the most elements found in Semitic languages compared to other Semitic languages. In this regard, Ahmad Muhammad Qaddur stated that there are similarities in the characteristics of the language spoken by the Samiyyah people with the Arabic language, among them: a. There is a similarity from a phonetic point of view, between the spoken language of the Samiyyah people and the Arabic language. This is because the Samiyah language emphasizes the sound of letters coming out of the throat cavity such as "ع, ح, غ, ء, ه". These letters are also found in Arabic. b. There are thick letter sounds in the Semitic language, namely ط, ظ, ض, ص. This bold letter is also found in Arabic. c. The Semitic language refers to the origin of the 3-letter word. This system is also found in Arabic which emphasizes the verb from 3 letters. Furthermore, in the end, the Arabic language experienced various changes and developments in accordance with human civilization.

III. METHODS

This research is a qualitative research with the type of literature study. This study uses data collection methods in the form of documentation of all libraries related to Islamic boarding schools and the Arabic language. Then, the data analysis used is descriptive analysis and content analysis. In this study the

researchers used the triangulation technique as a technique to test the validity of the data. In this study, researchers used two types of triangulation, namely: technique triangulation and source triangulation.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

All this time, the field of epistemology or Islamic scientific structure of pesantren can be said to have not received special attention from Muslim scientists. What exists is limited to the connection between the scientific structure and the curriculum or the yellow book or just mentioning and expressing its contents globally, not reaching the most fundamental structure of the yellow book's scientific reasoning.¹⁰ The yellow book (*kitab kuning*) as a boarding school scholarly tradition is placed in a special position. Because, its existence is the main element and at the same time the distinguishing feature between pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions. In pesantren in Java and Madura, the spread of knowledge, the type of book and the yellow book teaching system have similarities, namely sorogan and bandongan. These similarities result in the homogeneity of outlook on life, culture and religious practices among santri.¹¹ Overall, the yellow book taught in pesantren can be grouped into eight areas of study, namely: *nahwu* dan *sharaf*, *fiqh*, *ushul fiqh*, *tasawuf* dan *akhlak*, *tafsir*, *hadits*, *tauhid*, *tarikh* and *balaghah*. Some of the texts of these books are very short, some are in volumes. This grouping of yellow books can be classified into three levels, namely: basic level books, middle level books and upper level books. In addition, based on the author's period (musyanif) before or after the 19th century AD, the yellow book can be grouped into two: First, *al-Kutub al-Qadîmah*, *kitab klasik salaf.*, (the classic book of the Salaf).

All these books are the products of scholars before the 19th century AD. The general characteristics are: first, the introductory language is entirely classical, consisting of lyrical literature (*nadzam*) or lyrical prose (*natsar*). Second, do not add punctuation marks, such as commas, periods, exclamation marks, question marks and so on. Third, don't recognize paragraphs or paragraphs. As a replacement, the level of description is often arranged with the words *kitâbun*, *bâbun*, *fashlun*, *raf'un*, *tanbîh* and *tatimmatun.* Fourth, the content of the book is often duplicated from the scientific works of previous scholars. The source book is needed as a *matan*, which is developed into a resume (*mukhtashar* or *khulâshah*), *syarah*, *taqrîrat*, *ta'liqât* and so on. Fifth, especially the *salaf* book that circulates in pesantren, the author must be firmly affiliated with the *Sunni madhhab*, especially the *Arba'ah madhhab*. Meanwhile, the books of the Salaf whose authors are not affiliated with the *Sunni madhhab* are only limited by kyai as a comparative study. Second, *al-Kutub al-Ashriyyah*. These books are scientific products after the 19th century AD. The characteristics are: first, the language is rejuvenated or popular and enriched with scientific idioms from non-*syar'i* disciplines. In general, his essays are in the form of free prose. Second, the writing technique is equipped with punctuation marks that are very helpful for understanding. Third, his systematics and analytical approach were influenced by the general knowledge of his time.

Fourth, the content of the essay is the result of a literary study that refers to many books and often has no attachment to a particular school of thought.¹² In general, the books taught in pesantren cover several fields of study, namely, the Qur'an, *tafsir*, *hadits*, *ilmu hadits*, Arabic language, *tauhid/aqidah*, *akhlak*, *tasawuf* and *mantiq*. The yellow books are used based on the level pattern. At the basic level, the books used are still elementary and relatively easy to understand. For example, *'Aqîdah al-'Awwâm* (monotheism), *Safînah al-Najâh (fiqh)*, *Washâya al-Abnâ'* (morality) and *Hidâyah al-Shahibyân (tajwid)*. At the secondary level the books used are: *Matan Taqrîb*, *Fath al-Qarîb* and *Minhâj al-Qawîm (fiqh)*, *Jawâhir al-Kalâmiyyah and al-Dîn al-Islâmî (tawhid)*, *Ta'lîm al-Muta'allim (morality)*, *'Imrithi and Nahwu al-Wâdhih (nahwu)*, *al-Amsilah al-Tashrîfiyyah*, *Matan al-Binâ'* and *Kaelani (sharaf)* as well as *Tuhfah al-Athfâl*, *Hidâyah al-Mustafid*, *Musyid al-Wildân* and *Syifâ al-Rahmân (tajwid)*.

On the upper level of the books used, namely: *Jalâlayn (tafsir)*, *Mukhtâr al-Hadîts*, *al-Arba'în Nawâwi*, *Bulûgh al-Marâm* and *Jawâhir al-Bukhâri (hadiths)*, *Minhâj al-Mughîts (musthalah hadiths)*,

Tuhfah al -Murîd, Husûn al-Hamîdiyyah, 'Aqîdah Islamiyyah and Kifâyah al-'Awâm (tawhid), Kifâyah al-Akhyâr and Fath al-Mu'în (fiqh), Waraqat al-Sulâm (usul fiqh), Alfîyyah Ibnu Mâlik, Mutammimah , 'Imrithi, Syabrawi and al-'Ilal (nahwu and sharaf) as well as Minhâj al-'Âbidîn and Irsyâd al-'Ibâd (sufism/morality). The most interesting thing is that at this pesantren the book *al-Munawwaraq* is used as a *mantîq* (formal logic) lesson, which contains Aristotle's logic and others.¹³ By observing the structure of the yellow book that dominates pesantren scientific studies, in general the scientific tradition of pesantren is mainly related to monotheism, jurisprudence and morals as well as Sufism, which is the foundation of its curriculum, then it is still dominated by epistemology or *bayani* reasoning.

As explained by Sembodo Ardi Widodo that as an Islamic scientific tradition that has taken root, *Bayani's* reasoning is very influential in the formation of pesantren science, namely through the yellow books taught in various pesantren in Indonesia that are spread in scientific fields such as *aqidah, fiqh, Arabic language (nahwu-shorof)* and morality.¹⁴ With the yellow book as a special character in the traditional structure of pesantren knowledge, the Arabic language is implicitly also a special characteristic that determines the learning of the yellow book. Consequently, a pesantren that does not teach Arabic cannot be called a pesantren, especially if it refers to the element of the yellow book as the main element of pesantren education as emphasized by Zamakhsyari Dhofier. Learning Arabic in the pesantren world is prioritized for the purpose of religious studies. Without meaning to ignore other Arabic language learning skills, Arabic language learning at pesantren is mainly intended for the deepening of authentic sources of religion namely the Qur'an and Hadith along with explanatory books compiled by the Ulema'. Language learning is necessary so that a person can communicate with the sources of Islamic teachings properly and correctly. The purpose of language learning is to master language knowledge and Arabic speaking skills, such as *mutholaah, muhadatsah, insya'; nahwu and sharaf*, so as to acquire language skills that cover four aspects of skills, namely: listening skills, reading skills, writing skills, and speaking skills. Because the original sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an, hadiths and Islamic sciences are written in Arabic, it is very important for Muslims, especially scholars, to learn and understand and master the Arabic language. If it is not difficult for us to study Islam from its original source which comes from the Arabic language.

Therefore learning Arabic in Islamic Education is very important, due to: firstly, that the original sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an and Hadith, are written in Arabic, secondly, books by great scholars that influence the flow of thought of Muslims, especially in the field Tafsir, hadith, jurisprudence, *aqidah, Sufism* are written in Arabic, thirdly, the study of Islamic science will gain more weight if references are taken from the Arabic language, fourthly, the current reality among Muslim scholars, especially in Indonesia, is getting thinner in the study of Islamic science based on the Arabic language. After the Arabic language was made by Allah SWT as the language of the Qur'an, then there was an extraordinary development in this language, leading to various important roles in the interaction of human life, especially in Islamic education, these roles can be classified as follows: First , Arabic acts as the language of revelation, so it becomes a special language. It indicates that God is pleased to speak to mankind in Arabic through the Qur'an. QS Yusuf verse 2: "Indeed, We sent it down in the form of Al Quran in Arabic, so that you can understand it". Second, the role of the Arabic language as the language of human communication to Allah SWT. In the Islamic religion, there are certain acts of worship, namely prayer, remembrance and supplication, which are performed using the Arabic language. Prayer as a human medium communicates directly with God, all the readings in it use Arabic. So in order to understand and understand the meaning in it one needs to learn Arabic. Third, international Arabic. Arabic has an important role in the international world, it is used in the world of Islamic education as well as non-Islamic education, even being studied at major universities in the world, such as Harvard University and Oxford University.

In addition, Arabic is also used in other international forums such as the United Nations (UN). The four roles of the Arabic language in Islamic studies. Arabic is used in various books of Tafsir, Hadith, Sufism, Fiqh, Law and others. So that in order to understand it, mastery of the Arabic language is required in

order to avoid misunderstandings. Thus the Arabic language has shown how important its position is in various aspects, both as the language of revelation, the language of worship and the language of international communication. So learning Arabic is one of the main keys to opening the doors of knowledge, both religious, social, political, economic, and cultural. In his phenomenal book, *History of The Arabs* Philip K. Hitti said that in the Middle Ages for hundreds of years Arabic was the language of science, culture, and progressive thought throughout the civilized world. Between the 9th and 12th centuries, more works of philosophy, medicine, history, religion, astronomy, and geography were written in Arabic than in other languages. From here, the dark times of Europe in the middle ages began to light up and gave birth to the era of European renewal after taking and transferring knowledge and culture from the Muslim people to the Western world. 15 A western orientalist feels incomplete if he is not able to understand the Arabic language. For them the Arabic language is very important, because to read and know the works of Muslim scholars is not enough if only through translation. Not everything will be translated just like that, of course only the good and good ones will be chosen.

This is what caused them to learn Arabic in earnest, so that the Arabic language developed rapidly among the West from the middle ages until now. With the role of the Arabic language since the past fourteen centuries, of course there has been a lot of knowledge that has been influenced by the Arabic language, whether it is terms or expressions or the style of language and so on which until now has not been revealed as a challenge or responsibility of Muslim scholars to examine and express it even more in the religious field. The development of religious understanding patterns that are literal, textual, and partial in seeing the existence of other religions. For example, many terms and idioms such as jihad and infidel in religious scriptures are often used to justify the importance of group identity to defend against or fight other groups so that there is "forced interpretation". 16 Because Islamic education has a significant role in the problem. Every religion has a holy book that is used as a reference in behaving and acting, including Islam which uses the Qur'an and the Hadith as guidelines for life, because both sources of teachings use the Arabic language, then learning Arabic is felt to be very important as a transmitter for accurately and intelligently understand the contents of the teachings of the two sources.

V. CONCLUSION

Kitab kuning (yellow book) is the basic curriculum in Islamic boarding school education, this is because the language used as the instrument is Arabic Language (AL). Therefore, the educational process in Islamic boarding schools is undoubtedly in direct contact with the use of AL, even AL as one of the epistemes in scientific development. In this case, the researcher describes AL as a fundamental epistem in pesantren education and its relation to the scientific construction of pesantren which is based on it. Scientifically, this research has found AL 's position in Islamic boarding schools, namely as (1) The episteme of the scientific tradition of Islamic boarding schools is the bayani episteme based on BA in aqidah and shari'ah islamiyah; and (2) AL studied in Islamic boarding school education begins with theoretical AL which is oriented towards the practice of reading the yellow book as the basic curriculum in Islamic boarding school learning. This research still has quite a large space, for this reason it is necessary to carry out further research, which is not only related to the position of AL as the basic epistem in the scientific tradition of Islamic boarding schools, but also related to intervention, impact, selection or influence on the acquisition of AL.

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