
ARALISH: A NEW PHENOMENON IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL)

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Abstract

In TEFL, a method of teaching which is the most efficacious needs applying. Students have their own different characteristics and interest in term of learning and acquisitioning English as foreign language. This occasionally makes English teachers need to find even a unique method of teaching.

“Aralish” is a blend deriving from *Arabic* and *English*. It is then used to name a method of teaching combining the characteristic of Arabic and English languages in learning English as foreign language or vice versa. Arabic and English have a set of similarities and differences. It seems that the differences are more found instead of the similarities, but when explaining the language components of both languages: pronunciation, morphology and syntax, the logically equivalent terms of both languages are available. This strongly does help the students who simultaneously learn both of the languages.

“Aralish”, is now being applied as a treatment for the students who join the *LBA MA NU TBS* Kudus. *LBA* is a foreign language corner founded by *Madrasah Aliyah Nahdlatul Ulama Tasywiquth Thullab Salafiyah (MA NU TBS)* Kudus to make its graduates supported with the two main worldwide languages, Arabic and English. *LBA* builds a memorandum of agreement (MOU) with English Education Department Teacher Training and Education Faculty Muria Kudus University PBI FKIP UMK) in recruiting the trainers. The trainers are exclusive, since they do not only have to master English but also Arabic as well.

Although this new phenomenon has not been formally brought into an experimental research or classroom action research, but as far I, one of the trainers of *LBS*, have been observing, the students, at least, have been strongly motivated in the teaching and learning process, since they learn two things that are closely related.

I. Introduction

English as a foreign language, nowadays, has penetrated the smallest institution of education in Indonesia. It is a kind of demand, even which a playgroup has to complete. It is English that makes traditional Islamic institutions of education change their former belief, that

English is a language of colonizer so that learning it is a sin, into a widely open thought, that it is a means of transferring and developing scientific and religious knowledge.

However, the more widely open thought among the traditional Islamic institutions of education still rests in the former classical belief; and this causes the students to have low self motivation to learn English. They consider English is as not important as Arabic which is the language of Holy Quran and other knowledge of Islam. When learning Arabic they have high motivation for it is, for sure, used to learn Islam.

Some languages are, in some occasions, similar in some aspects as well as Arabic and English. Arabic and English are approved to have some similarities one another. This seems to be good news for the students in such institutions of education. The similarities of Arabic and English impress the students that Arabic and English are in fact close; and they get more motivated in learning English as they learn Arabic.

That phenomenon inspires an effort to find an efficacious method of teaching and learning English for such students. ARALISH is then tried to be used to answer that phenomenon.

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In other word, ARALISH is just to name a linguistic analysis method, contrastive analysis used as a method of teaching and learning English. Contrastive analysis is claimed to be a rather old fashioned method in acquisitioning second or foreign language, it is, however, still effective to solve some related problems in certainly typical schools or educational institutions.

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II. Object of the Study

Although this study is still in the form an opinion paper; I then dream to conduct a related research specially investigating the probability of using ARALISH contrastive analysis as a method in teaching and learning English as foreign language in some exclusively traditional Islamic (boarding) schools.

An experimental research, a classroom action research, or a developmental research can probably be the design of this future research.

III. Theoretical Framework

III.1. The Significance of Contrastive Analysis in TEFL

Contrastive analysis (Kanarakis in Mackey, 1967) is the comparison of equivalent portions of two languages for the purpose of isolating the probable problems that speakers of one language will have in acquiring the other.

The phrase contrastive analysis also identifies a general approach to the investigation of language, particularly when carried on in certain areas of applied linguistics, such as foreign-language teaching and translation. In the contrastive analysis of two languages, the points of structural difference are identified, and these are, then, studied as areas of potential difficulty in foreign language teaching. It is never to be forgotten that contrastive analysis is synchronic; that is to say, we study the language items used in the same period. We don't study the items of a language in different periods under the heading of contrastive analysis.

We should never forget that, contrast, being the fundamental of language, is a fundamental of language teaching and learning. Randal Whitman (1970) noted that contrastive analysis involved four different procedures:

1. Description

The linguist or teacher, using the tools of formal grammar, explicitly describes the two languages in question.

2. Selection

A selection is made of certain forms -linguistic items, rules, structures- for contrast, since it is virtually impossible to contrast every possible facet of two languages. Whitman admits that the selection process “reflects the conscious and unconscious assumptions of the investigator”, which in turn affect exactly what forms are selected.

3. Contrast

The mapping of one linguistic system onto the other, and a specification of the relationship of one system to the other which, like selection, “rests on the validity of one’s reference points.”

4. Prediction

We formulate a prediction of error or if difficulty on the basis of the first three procedures-that prediction can be arrived at through the formulation of a hierarchy of difficulty or through more subjective applications of psychological and linguistic theory.

III.2 Aralish Contrastive Analysis (CA)

Some researchers and analysts claim that Arabic and English are two languages which have similarities and distinctions in a couple of aspects, such as morphology, phonetics, grammar, syntax, and even some social and cultural aspects.

III.2.1 Aralish CA of Phonology

Both English and Arabic use a pulmonic regressive airstream mechanism. This means that all the speech sounds of English and Arabic are produced using the lung-air that we breathe out.

The following is the comparative and contrastive analysis of the segmental phonemes of English and Arabic, showing the major phonetic and phonological differences between the segmental phonemes of this Aralish.

III.2.1.1 Vowel System

There are five areas of Aralish CA of phonology:

- 1) When English vowels are followed by a voiced consonant or occur word-finally, they tend to be longer than they are when they are followed by a voiceless consonant. Thus, the vowel /u/ in the words *soon* and *sue* is slightly longer than it is in the word *suit*.
- 2) There is a difference in the vowel quality between the English /i:/ and the Arabic /i:/ and also between the English /I/ and the Arabic /I/. There is no instrumental evidence to support this claim. English [i] sounds higher than Arabic [i] and that the Arabic [I] sounds higher than the English [I].
- 3) English /u/ sounds slightly higher than Arabic /u/ and that the Arabic /U/ sounds slightly higher than the English /U/.
- 4) As shown in the chart above, the *central low unrounded lax vowel* /a/ exists in Arabic but not in the vowel system of English. The closest English vowel to this Arabic vowel is the back vowel /ā/. Therefore, the CAH predicts that the subjects will use the *back low unrounded lax vowel* / ā /, which exists in their L1, instead of the target vowel /a/. However, since [ā] exists in Arabic as an allophone of the central phoneme /a/, the subjects' use of [ā] instead of [a] might not always lead to negative transfer.
- 5) Diphthongs [ay] and [aw] as [āy] and [āw] are velar, uvular and velarized.

The following table shows the similarities and the distinctions of vowel system of Aralish:

Aralish longer vowels	<i>soon</i>	مُسلمون
	<i>bean</i>	مُسلمين
Aralish short vowels	<i>suit</i>	سُ
/u/ in English is slightly higher than /u/ I Arabic	<i>university</i>	يُكافي
Aralish diphthong /ai/	<i>identify</i>	أين
Aralish diphthong /au/	<i>audience</i>	أولى
English diphthong /yu/	<i>student</i>	-
Aralish vowel /i/	<i>because</i>	بما

English vowel /E/	<i>bag</i>	-
English vowel /e/	<i>angel</i>	-

Aralish vowel /Ē/ Arabic <i>imalah</i>	<i>shape</i>	مجرها
Dissolved Aralish diphthong Arabic <i>ikhfa'</i>	<i>she's (she is)</i>	من وجود
Arabic vowel /ʾa/	-	عالم

III.2.2 Consonant System

The following table shows the similarities and the distinctions of consonant system of Aralish:

	<i>think</i> <i>birth</i>	ث ثْ
Aralish alveolar stop consonants	<i>taught</i> <i>cat</i> <i>worked</i>	ت تْ ذ (قلقلة صغرى)
Aralish alveolar fricative consonants	<i>shape</i> <i>wish</i>	ش شْ
Aralish palate-alveolar consonants	<i>jack</i>	ج
Aralish velar stop consonants	<i>book</i>	ك
English inter-dental fricative consonant	<i>beach</i> <i>chart</i>	- -
English velar stop consonants	<i>big</i>	-

	<i>gap</i>	
Aralish alveolar trill consonant Arabic <i>tafhim</i>	<i>car</i>	رْ
	-	غ
English velar nasal consonant	<i>going</i>	-
	-	غ\ع
Bilabial English consonant /p/	<i>page</i> <i>gap</i>	-
Double English consonant	<i>smart</i>	-
Similarly double English consonant Arabic <i>syiddah</i>	<i>add</i>	ء —

III.2.2 Aralish CA of Morphology

The following table shows the similarities and the distinctions of Aralish morphology:

Aspects	English	Arabic
1. Forms of number	Singular and plural <i>book-books</i> <i>child-children</i> <i>mouse-mice</i>	Singular, dual, plural كتاب- كتابان – كتابون مسجد – مسجدان – مساجد كتاب- كتابان – كتب
2. Noun-Adjective	<i>beautiful girl</i> <i>two beautiful girls</i> <i>many beautiful girls</i>	مرءة جميلة مرءتان جميلتان إمرأة جميلتون

3. Tenses	<p><u>Present</u> <i>I go to school everyday</i></p> <p><u>Past/perfect</u> <i>I went to school this morning</i></p> <p><u>Future</u> <i>I will send an sms</i></p>	<p><u>فعل مضارع</u> انا اذهب الى المدرسة كل يوم</p> <p><u>فعل ماض</u> ذهبت إلى المدرسة كل يوم</p> <p>انا سارسل الرسالة</p>
4. Subject-predicate agreement	I am reading holy Quran	انا اقرأ القرآن الكريم
5. Relative pronoun	<i>The teacher/s who...</i>	الأستاذ الذي\ الأستاذة التي الأستاذان الذان\ الأستاذتان التان الأساتذ الذين\ الأستاذات الاتي
6. Demonstrative	<p><i>this, these</i></p> <p><i>that, those,</i></p>	<p>هذا, هذان- هذين, هؤلاء</p> <p>هذه, هتان- هاتين</p> <p>ذاك, ذانك, أولئك</p>
7. Pronouns	<p>He, him, his/ It, it, its</p> <p>They, them, their</p> <p>She, her, her/ It, it, its</p> <p>They, them, their</p>	<p>هو, ه, ...ه</p> <p>هما, هما, ... هما</p> <p>هم, هم, ... هم</p> <p>هي, ها, ... ها</p> <p>هما, هما, ... هما</p> <p>هن, هن, ... هن</p> <p>انت, ك, ...ك</p> <p>انتما, كما, ...كما</p>

	You, you, your	انتم , كم , ... كم انت , ك , ... ك انتما , كما , ... كما انتن , كن , ... كن نحن , نا , ... نا
	We, us, our	
8. Daily expression (Formality)	Good morning, How are you?	صباح الخير كيف حالك؟
9. Salutation	Good morning, Mr. Black (family name)	صباح الخير أبو ...
10. Etc.		

IV. Current Implementation of Aralish CA in Teaching English

Although a formal research on the use of Aralish CA in teaching English has not been conducted, this kind of teaching method has been so far implemented. This is done for several considerations:

1. The students have low self-motivation or reinforcement in studying English as one the foreign languages.
2. Older view that English is not as important as Arabic, since Arabic is used in Holy Quran, and in other Islamic books. Studying Arabic is as a form of religious rituals so that those studying it will be believed to get reward from God, and unfortunately, English is a minor subject.

3. An inspiration appears to solve the problem, considering that English, in fact, has similarities with Arabic.
4. Teaching English by reinforcing the students that studying English is as important as Arabic. Arabic is in fact closely related with English for a couple of similarities.
5. Hopefully, the similarities of Aralish motivates the students to study English

In the teaching and learning process, this ARALISH CA method of teaching English is implemented through several steps and requirements:

1. The English teachers should master Arabic as well as English
2. While teaching English, particularly when explaining, the teachers compare the English concepts and Arabic concepts to strengthen the students' understanding.
3. The teachers sometimes present the English and Arabic terms, patterns; however, the portion of using the English concepts is bigger than the Arabic concepts.
4. The students having higher level of Arabic proficiency seem to have better level of English proficiency.

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