MANQUL: COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE OF GOD
TO THE DIVERSE ISLAMIC DISCIPLINES

MANQUL: PENYAMPAIAN PESAN TUHAN
KEPADA PENGIKUT ISLAM YANG BERAGAM

Darman Fauzan Dhahir
Balai Besar Pengembangan SDM dan Penelitian Komunikasi dan Informatika
Jl. Abdurrahman Basalamah II No.25, Makassar
Email: darmanfauzan@gmail.com

Abstract

Muslims are obliged to perform duties for worship properly and correctly. They are widely spread all over the world with a low Islamic literacy. Being a Muslim is just a bandwagon for them, thus they do worship without clear reference. The scholars do not give up on the situation by conducting the Qur'an and Hadith based Islamic teachings through various mediums. The famous mediums have several weaknesses that ultimately indicate how hard messages are delivered. The delivery is increasingly heavy due to the low literacy Arabic language, and reading interest.

In the midst of this situation, LDII as one of the Muslim communities has a growing number of members and is widespread in Indonesia, a country which also has many low-literacy Arabic citizens. The alumni are even widely spread abroad. Therefore, this study aims to find out how the teaching methods applied by the community. The finding was the community has been practicing anancient method, namely Manqul. It is a continued message delivery technique from the God as the communicator to the whole human being as the communicant through the messengers who really understand the messages they carry as well as practice them. They apply a unique technical writing to strengthen memories, and use the addition of auxiliary words to facilitate understanding to diverse disciples, even to those with low Arabic literacy and low reading interest. They deliver and preserve the Qur'an and the Hadith by both text and meaning.

Keywords: Textual translation, education communication, Manqul.

Abstrak


Kata kunci: Terjemahan, tekstual, komunikasi, pendidikan, Manqul.
INTRODUCTION

The Message of God

Every Muslim is obliged to obey Allah and the Messenger in order to be admitted into the heaven (Qur’an, n.d., Chapter 4: 13, 4: 59). To perform the obligations properly and correctly, Muslim should first understand what rules to obey, the Qur’an and the Hadiths indeed. The Qur’an is a book containing 114 chapters or 6,236 verses of commands, prohibitions, and stories of God those had been sent down to the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Haleem, 2011, p. 6; Santosa, Nurkamto, Baidan, & others, 2016) the objectives of this study are to assess the sub directive speech acts contained in the verses of the stories and the dominant directive speech acts. The research target is the verses (ayat; and the Hadiths are books which are containing everything based on the Prophet SAW in the form of words, actions, approvals, and natures those were narrated and transmitted continuously by trusted people and well-documented by the Hadith-book authors, (Al-Uṭaymin, 1994; Harpci, 2015; Haylamaz, 2014). It is also believed as the (indirect) message of God, but in the Prophet SAW’s version indeed (Qur’an, n.d., Chapter 53: 3-4).

Both are the main sources of knowledge in Islam, the right paths which should be followed (Abi-Dawūd, 2007, v. 2885; Ibn-Ānas, 1985, v. 899) for the entire life of all Muslim. Even when they find a confusion and/or disagree over anything and/or have a dispute concerning any matter, then they are ordered to seek references from the both (Qur’an, n.d., Chapter 4: 59).

Delivering the Message of God

The delivery of the Qur’an and the Hadiths become an obligation of all Muslims the God claimed that Islam is a universal religion and ordered the Prophet SAW and the followers to convey the messages to all humankind over the world. For that, there should be no distinction between the scholar and the low-literacy, the rich and the poor, the Arabian and (Arab-)foreigner (Qur’an, n.d., Chapter 21: 107, 3: 104 & 110, 80: 1). At the moment, Islam has been spread widely throughout the world, but with a lot of muallaf, the new convert followers (Kettani, 2010; Moon, Kobayashi, & Suh, 2006) and/or those are still poor on sharia (Islam law) literacy. For this reason, they need the guidance of implementation of Islam (Ismawati, 2012; Johari, Ali, Aziz, & Ahmad, 2014). Another reason is to open the eyes of the world so that the negative image addressed to Islam can be clarified whether it’s true or not (Ali, Salem, Oueslati, Andrew, & Quirke, 2011; Oueslati, McAndrew, & Helly, 2011).

But then, most of the guidance are preserved in Arabic, since the Qur’an was first revealed in that language to the Prophet SAW who natively spoke it. It is only Arabic version is considered as the only real direct words of God, the true Qur’an. In Islam, Arabic is the best language (Haleem, 2011). Even the Prophet SAW has made Sunna (exemplified) on it. He applied Arabic when he wrote letters of invitation to Islam to Heraclius the emperor of Byzantines, Khosrow the emperor of Persia, and Najashi the king of Abyssinia. But however, the emperors had translators indeed (El-Cheikh, 1999; Grabar, 2003; Peysepar & Attashi, 2016).

Nevertheless, in order to achieve the communication goals, the abroad followers as the communicants must be led to understand the message (Nasrullah, Kriantono, & Sujoko, 2018). But, the delivery of the messages to the foreign-speaking people would not be an easy job, since the diversity of the communicants has been an important factor that able to thwart the communications (Rung-Yu Tseng, Chuang, Hermann, Koehler, & Ellen Yi-Luen Do, 2011). Furthermore, when two people with different languages communicate, they will be sound less credible each other (Lev-Ari & Keysar, 2010). Moreover, if the communicants are the low-literacy or those who have low reading interest, it would be more difficult indeed. To overcome this problem, they must be led to master the language or be given to the translation in order that the messages are clearly understood. Unfortunately, the mastery of Arabic by the Arabic-foreigners is still very poor (Lobachev, 2008) and either, the Qur’an and the Hadith have not been translated properly (Elmgrab, 2013; Jassem, 2014; Nikayin, 2017; Xue-yi, 2010), hence the readings of those both Islamic guidance have been considered by the majority of Muslim asonly spells or poetry, not as something that has a meaning of being a guide of life (Estivalèzes, 2011; Hasibuan, 2014, p. xii; Sodhar, Shaikh, & Sodhar, 2015). It is even happening in Indonesia (Ismawati, 2012; Puyu, 2016; Sholeh, 2018), the home of the world’s largest Muslim population (Heryanto & Mandal, 2004).

However, practitioners outside Arabic countries do not give upon the situation. Islamic
teachings in the Qur’an and Hadith are remain conducted. Medium they utilize, such as: Islamic schools (Hamdeh, 2015; Novia, 2015), mosques (Ghazali, Yusof, Md. Sawari, & Shah, 2016; Mughal, 2015), door to door engagements (Balci, 2012; Siyami & Musawwamah, 2015), books (Leichtman, 2009), television (Rofil, Md Syed, & Hamzah, 2016; Siagian, Mustari, & Ahmad, 2016), radio (Sakai & Fauzia, 2014), and internet (Mahmood & Qayyum, 2015). They apply several techniques, such as lectures (Dohrn, 2014), preachments (Millie, 2011), readings (Ramli, Majid, & Nazri, 2013; Sudrajat, 2016, p. 17), articles and translation book providing (Zulkefli, Rahman, Bakar, & Alam, 2015), and application-examples (Dohrn, 2014).

In Islamic (boarding) school, students will learn complete subject matters, such as: Arabic grammar, technique of the Qur’an reading well and truly (tajwïd), logic, jurisprudence and its principles (Fiqh and usül al-fiqh), doctrine of monotheism, the Qur’an exegesis, the Hadiths, the science of hadith, piety and appropriate behavior (akhlaq and tarbïya), Sufism (tasawwuf), life histories of the Prophet SAW (sïra) and works in praise of the Prophet. They are classified according to their knowledge level into primary, secondary and high levels of three years each, as well as the advanced level, a no limited time level. They need long enough time to be allowed to learn the main guidance, due they are supposed to spend at least their first six years on the basic knowledge mastery before learning the Qur’an and the Hadith (Bruijessen, 1990; Sumardi, 2012). On the same level, the students are usually average peers. Almost all of the techniques are applied in the process of teaching-learning there (Fatchan, Amirudin, & Soekamto, 2015; Wekke, 2015). Unfortunately, there is only a low number of Muslim can achieve the advanced level (Bakri, 2017; BR, 2015).

Commonly, Muslims prefer to listen to preachment speeches in Mosques, or trough television and radio broadcasts, especially for those who have a low reading interest (Kumbara, 2008; Yusof, 2010). Unfortunately, this technique has several weaknesses, they are: (1) The preacher is difficult to understand the audience understanding of the materials presented; (2) It is only the preacher who is active, while the audience is passive; (3) It is difficult to explore the mindset of the audience and their attention; and (4) The preacher tend to be authoritarian (Faisal, 2014). The mass media, such as television, and radio has various communication methods, besides has a wide range, heterogeneous audiences, but it is occasionally doubtful because sometimes there is a mixture of truth and fallacy/ heresy in it (Atabik, 2013).

Some others of Muslim choose to read books as reference, and some more prefer to access the internet, the convergence media to find lectures, preachment speeches, readings, examples in form of articles, book, audio and/or video. Both of them are the active audience learning styles. The success of this style will depend on their literacy, for several reasons: (1) The missing-translations are frequently happening due to limitedness of the translators (Newmark, 1996, p. 101); (2) The anonymous authors of internet content (Rob Kling, Ya-Ching Lee, Al Teich, 1999); (3) The hoaxes are spread in the internet (Arif, 2016); and (4) Even if the translator machines are continuously developed, so far, the level of accuracy is still minimal (Groves & Mundt, 2015).

**LDII and Manqul**

This study will describe how LDII (Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia/ Institution of Islam Preachment of Indonesia) community deliver the Qur’an and the Hadith to the diverse Muslims in style of Manqul. The information has been provided by the methods of participant-observation (at the habitation and learning centre of LDII in Indonesia, such as Java (Bandung, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Kediri, and Pamekasan), Sulawesi (Makassar, Palu, Manado, Polewali Mandar, Palopo, Selayar, Bantaeng, Gowa, Pangkep, Gorontalo, Kotamobagu, Minahasa, Baubau, and Sangihe), Nusa Tenggara (West Sumba, Belu, and Kupang), Bali, and Papua (Biak, Jayapura, Wamena, and Sorong)), interview (with muballig/preachers, leaders, and/or members) and discussion during 2016/2017.

LDII (Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia/ Institution of Islam Preachment of Indonesia), as a community of Muslim in Indonesia which is well developed enough. I did not find any valid data that showed the total number of them, but according to Hidayat Nahwi Rasul, one of LDII’s central chairmen when interviewed at June 2016, the organization branches exist in all of 34 provinces in Indonesia. In a whole world recitation program held in the month of Ramadan (June) 2017, at the Wali Barokah Islamic boarding school, Kediri, some participants who came from outside Indonesia introduced themselves. They were alumnus who
They argue that the deeds of Muslim who do dhikr, fajr, zuhr, asr, maghrib, and 'isha (see Qur’an n.d., chap. 12: 100, 114), zaka'at (see Qur’an n.d., chap. 2: 254; 16: 90; 24: 17), and to pay zakat (regular charity (see ibn-Majah 2007, vol. 3659)), other verses, the Hadith and/or explanation from the previous followers (closer to the Prophet & his companions who were even ummi (unlettered) were also doing it (see Qur’an n.d., chap. 2: 78, 21: 107; Al-Buhari 2009, v. 1739; Al-Tirmidi 2013, v. 2669).

Hence, even its members are divers, they are determined that the diversity is not a barrier for them for delivering and/or receiving the God’s message. It is very often conveyed in recitations in all places which I have participated in, even causing a punishment of God (see Qur’an n.d., chap. 4: 47; Al-Buhari 2009, v. 7350; Al-Naisabury 2012, v. 53(400)).

Muslims are spread and various in terms of literacies, ages, genders, cultures, languages, races, countries, etc. They believe that all of them need to understand the message of God. Whoever has understood the message earlier, then he/she should apply it to his/her life and deliver it to others, like the Prophet SAW has (see Qur’an n.d., chap. 2: 78, 21: 107; Al-Buhari 2009, v. 1739; Al-Tirmidi 2013, v. 2669).

For that, the community applies the technique of Manqul (like Hijjang et al. 2015 has found) in delivering the message of the God, where translation is included. Manqul is an Arabic word that means something delivered and/or transferred. It is a concept of gaining the knowledge/information until someone understand the message from a narrator who has gained his/her knowledge/information from his/her guru(s) who had gained it from his/her guru(s), and so on and so forth until it is based on the Prophet SAW.

I see here, the technique is actually similar to the Talqiqi Bersanad, a continuously maintained narration of the Qur’an and the Hadith, from the full stop beginning to the end(Ramli et al., 2013). A verse of the Qur’an is exegeted by using other verses, the Hadith and/or explanation from the previous followers (closer to the Prophet SAW would be better) and so is the exegesis of the Hadith.

The chairman of the Majelis Taujih wal Irsyad (Council of Missionaries) of LDII, Kasmudi Assidqi stated at June 2017 that the manqul is practiced in seven grade ways as the previous ulama’ (scholars) have practiced, they are (form the best): al-Sama’ (the disciple listens to the narration of the guru)(see Abi-Dawud, 2007, v. 3659), al-Ard (the disciplennarrates, and the
guru examines) (Abi-Dawūd, 2007, v. 3204), al-Munawalahbi jazaturrawi (the guru hands over the book to the disciple to be conveyed, for the guru, believes that he/she is able to understand the book and is able to convey), al-Munawalahbi gairijazaturrawi (the guru hands over the book to the disciple to be conveyed, for the guru, believes that he/she is able to understand the book and is able to convey), al-Munawalahbi jazaturrawi (the guru hands over the book to the disciple to be practiced, not to be conveyed to others, for the guru believes that he/she is able to practice the book but has not been able to convey) (see Hamel, 1999), al-Kitaba (disciple reads the letter that the guru sends), al-Ijazatu al-rawi (the guru gives permission to the disciple to share the narration of him/her) (see Al-Buhari, 2009, v. 1450), and al-Wijada (when someone finds a note of his/her guru that he/she really understands, then he/she applies and/or shares it and tells the one he/she shares to that the narration was gained from the guru) (see Abi-Dawūd, 2007, v. 1108).

The members and even the alumni who live abroad in Indonesia run their life normally as common people while continuing to apply the manqul, whether as a muballig or a disciple. They claim that the Prophet was practicing the Manqul too. They refer to ibn-Majah (2009, v. 1621) and Al-Buhari (2009, v. 3219) which tell that the Gabriel recited/taught the Qur’an to the Prophet SAW. They also refer to the explanation of the Prophet on the exegesis of the Qur’an (chap. 2: 187) about time for fasting. It was a verse which reads that a Muslim is allowed to eat and drink until white thread becomes distinct to them from the black thread. Then a companion of Him was eating while keeping watching both the thread until he was able to see the difference. It was then corrected and explained by the Prophet SAW, based on the God’s revelation, that the meaning was the rising of dawn (see Al-Naisabury 2012, vv. 1090-1). The practice of the manqul is appropriate to the community’s mission to make the Qur’an and the Hadith to be easily and clearly understood by as much as possible of Muslim in order that those both books to be truly applied as the prime guidance of their life.

Practice of Manqul

As long as the observation I had been conducting during 2016/2017 at the habituation and learning centre of LDII in Indonesia, such as Java (Bandung, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Kediri, and Pamekasan), Sulawesi (Makassar, Palu, Manado, Polewali Mandar, Palopo, Selayar, Bantaeng, Gowa, Pangkep, Gorontalo, Kotamobagu, Minahasa, Buaubau, and Sangihe), Nusa Tenggara (West Sumba, Belu, and Kupang), Bali, and Papua (Biak, Jayapura, Wamena, and Sorong), it was only the al-Sama’ applied I found.

The disciples were listening and writing to the reading of the muballig. Their example of writing is available in Figure 1. Even when sending a letter (al-Kitaba), there was always a messenger or representative sent to receive and bring the message back and read it to his/her member group. The messenger is required to be clever because he/she is responsible for the understanding of his/her group members. Several interviewed muballigs in Jakarta, Kediri, Makassar, and West Sumba explained that it was to ensure the message to be delivered well and correctly as aimed.

They claimed that the best reference is whatever refer to both text and context of both guidances, therefore they do not recommend teaching one of them alone. Their opinion is the same as Robarts (2008) who included a written version when delivering a message verbally. Besides, they believe that the ability of most Muslim nowadays to memorize the rules of religion (text and context) are low, because of the poor attention to religion matter. They think that even if someone has been told and understood a thing previously (but with no writing), he/she will be neglected by the worldly business, so then he/she will forget it. It is why the writing becomes the hallmark of this community, thus textbooks or sheets (of the Quran and the Hadith) and stationery are the minimum tools the disciples are required to have in every Manqul event. Besides, the muballigh is prohibited to teach without the Qur’an or the Hadith those completed with his/her self-written notes of meaning and explanation (something he/she gained from his/her guru). Kasmudi Assidqi (interview in June, 2017) claimed it as an effort of keeping the purity of the both.
By the diversity of the members, then they translate the original Arabic Qur’an or the Hadith into three main languages, such as Javanese, Indonesian, and English. Kasmudi Assidqi (interviewed in June, 2017) explained why they use the original Arabic to translate. The reason is that many ways for the original meaning to deviate through the repeated translations, just similar to Ballesteros’ (2000) argument. Practically, the muballigs translate and interpret them by every single word, by the phrase, and by terminology, according to the chapters read or in sequence. Every word that is translated comes with explanations but is not exactly like a grammar lesson that uses code/terms that is difficult to understand by laypeople. Commonly, they use simple auxiliaries such as, as for, who, whom, whose, what, that, apparently and that is, to describe words posing as subjects, objects, details, aliases, etc. Besides, the pronouns are usually immediately referred to the intended.

They do not focus on the linguistics, but on the meaning of the message and the how of its implementation instead, thus much of them (for example) able to recite the Qur’an match to the tajwid science, but admitting that they do not understand about the tajwid. They also learn and practice the fiqh, tashhid, etc., but do not aware that it, in fact, is the fiqh, tashhid, etc. Which they know, just if the Prophet SAW exemplified that, and then they follow to do it according to the circumstances. The point is that, like a native speaker who does not need to be aware of the grammar as long as they understand what they are talking about or listening.

The disciples claim that by this method of the al-Sama’of maqul, the lessons are more easily accepted and applied. They become aware of the meaning of every single word of both references. By writing the lesson deliberately, it has helped their memory, unlike the reading ready-made translations, sometimes there are sentences that missing from the attention or are less understood. They make the expression of the parable: “it will be easy for someone to find a hidden treasure if he is directly told where it is, how to find it and how to take it by the one who keeps it, rather than someone who is told to self-learn the instructions”. As a result of my participant-observation experience, I consider it as true. When I asked the community, why they practiced a worship in a certain way, most of them sure that it based on clear references because they have been read by the muballighs and read the verse from the books their selves, unlike the commons who do worship just by the bandwagon(Siym & Musawwamah, 2015).

To follow the event as a disciple, the competencies someone are required to have are the ability of reading (silently) the Arabic letter (see Dykas and Sanders 2009), writing (in any style, essentially understood by the writer himself), and listening. A disciple who has not able to read the Arabic letter will be taught in advance. In their studying center (boarding school/school), when practicing the al-Sama’, the disciples are classified according to their writing speed into three classes, such as lambatan (slow reading-dictation), cepatan (fast reading-dictation), and asrama (faster reading-dictation). In there, it takes only about a single year for completing the reading, meaning and explanation writing of the whole Qur’an as well as about 20 subject matter summary sets of the Hadith. Whereas in the reading to the members at widespread places, the muballigh normally adjust his/her reading speed to suit the audience.
On the other hand, the practice of the *al-Munawala* and the *al-Ijazatu al-rawi* is rare (but still exists) because of caution, lest it deviates from authenticity. The guru always examines the disciple’s skills and understandings earnestly before applying it. The *al-Wijaža* was less often, and even then if there is, then before it to be acknowledged, several studies should be conducted by experts. They check it’s conformity with the postulates of the previously studied the Qur’an and the Hadith. If it is in accordance with the existing sciences, then accepted as the last preferred source of knowledge.

They keep continuing to hold *manqul* in order to preserve their faith, even though they have repeatedly reviewed the study or even they are the guru. They believe that faith can increase and decrease. In addition, without any discrimination, anyone of the disciples who have completed the Qur’an and certain Hadiths and has the ability to read the books well and correctly, may take the test to become a certified *muballig*. Unless they may share and discuss their *manqul* (the knowledge they have gained by *manqul*) each other.

**CONCLUSION**

The *manqul*, a way to teach and learning the Qur’an and Hadith that continues from guru to disciple has been practiced by the LDII Muslim community. This community continues to increase in number from time to time, and has alumni who are spread across the archipelago, as well as overseas. Members of this community consist of diverse ethnicities, languages, ages, education and occupations, including those who have low Arabic literacy.

*Manqul*’s is following the ways of the earlier ulamas in the delivery of Islamic religion, as stated in the famous Hadith text. From several ways *manqul*, LDII practices *Al-sama*. *Al-sama* is when the disciple listens to the narration of the guru, then they record it manually in their books. The guru translate the Qur’an and Hadith in words, use auxiliary words, then translate the whole and explain it. This method is believed to be easier to recall lessons that have been received, because at any time can reopen the books. Community members are very confident that the practices they practice are based on correct references, because they have seen the verse or hadith themselves. This method is a shortcut to be able to immediately practice the Qur'an and hadith without lingering on learning languages first.

The implication of this study, *Manqul* can be tested to be applied in learning using foreign language references, whether the lesson of religion or others. The following research can compare the effectiveness of the *manqul* method to other methods.

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