PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS’ READINESS ON THE 
TEACHING OF ARABIC LANGUAGE: A CASE 
STUDY AT UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN 
 IDRIS

BY

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement 
for the degree of Master of Education (Teaching of 
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ABSTRACT

The teaching process is highlighted as a crucial issue since the main goal of teaching must be guaranteed effective. Having ready before teaching is not an exception in this regard as the teacher’s criteria in imparting knowledge to his students is expectedly intended to facilitate effective and meaningful teaching. Therefore, the study generally attempts to investigate the perceived level of pre-service teachers’ readiness towards teaching Arabic language. The study attempted to determine the level of readiness in three areas; Knowledge of Subject Area (KSA), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and Interest in the teaching of Arabic language. The present study also attempted to verify the association between KSA and Interest and KSA and PCK. The study employed a survey method to gather the data. The respondents of this study were final year of pre-service teachers of Bachelor Degree Arabic Language with Education at Sultan Idris University of Education. The study used a set of questionnaire as an instrument to collect the data. It was distributed to thirty (30) respondents and the data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 17.0) software. The simple descriptive statistical analysis; percentage, frequency, standard deviation and mean was used to interpret the data. Besides that, the inferential statistical analysis; chi-square test were used to examine the association between the variables. The findings show that the readiness in terms of KSA and PCK among pre-service teachers was at a medium level. Meanwhile, the result demonstrates a high level of interest in the teaching of Arabic language among pre-service teachers. The results of findings also identified that there is no association between KSA and Interest in the teaching of Arabic language among population. In the meantime, the study shows that there is strong association between KSA and PCK among pre-service teachers on the teaching of Arabic language. The study recommends some recommendations to further improve the performance of Bachelor Degree Arabic Language with Education pre-service teachers to enhance the level of readiness during teaching training period. At the same time, it is hoped that the study could assist and benefit the stakeholder of schools such as the curriculum planners and the faculty of education in universities to design more comprehensive and cohesive curriculum in the future in order to prepare Arabic language pre-service teachers better in the teaching profession.
خلاصة البحث

تعد منهجية التدريس من القضايا التربوية الحاسمة، على اعتبار أن الهدف الرئيس من التدريس هو ضمان الفاعلية في منهجية التدريس. ثم إن الإعداد الجيد قبلاً، في مجال التدريس لا يعد أمراً استثنائياً في هذا الصدد، حيث يُطلب أن تكون المعايير الخاصة بالتعلم في ثلثي التعليم والمعرفة إلى الطلبة أكثر فاعلية وذات مغزى في طريقة التدريس. لذا، تسعى هذه الدراسة بشكل عام إلى التحقق من مستوى إدراك واستعداد المعلمون قبل بدئهم في تعليم اللغة العربية. وتم تحديد مستوى الاستعداد في ثلاثة متفاوتين وهما: العلم بالموضوع، ومعرفة المحتوى التربوي، والرغبة في تدريس اللغة العربية. كما تسعى الدراسة إلى التحقق من العلاقة بين متغير العلم بالموضوع ومتغير الرغبة في تدريس اللغة، وكذلك العلاقة بين متغير العلم بالموضوع ومتغير معرفة المحتوى التربوي. واستخدمت الدراسة منهجية المسح لجمع البيانات، وتأتي عينة الدراسة معلمي السنة الأخيرة في مرحلة ما قبل الخدمة بدرجة البكالوريوس في تخصص اللغة العربية والتربيه، بجامعة السلطان إدريس للغة العربيه، واستخدمت الدراسة مجموعة من الاستنتاجات كأداة جمع البيانات، ووزعت إلى (30) من عينة البحث، وتم تحليل البيانات بواسطة برنامج الحزم الإحصائية (SPSS 17.0). كما استخدمت الدراسة كل من أدوات البرنامج التالية لинтерفเสรبيت، وهي: التحليل الإحصائي الوصفي البسيط، والنسبة المئوية، والتردودات، والأخيروات المعيار، والمتوسط. إلى جانب ذلك استخدمت الدراسة أداة التحليل الإحصائي الاستدلالي، واختيار مربع كاي، وذلك لاختبار العلاقة بين المتغيرات. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن استعداد معلمي ما قبل الخدمة في متغير العلم بالموضوع ومعرفة المحتوى التربوي كان في مستوى المتوسط. في حين أظهرت النتيجات مستويات مرتفعة في متغير رغبة المعلمين في تدريس اللغة العربية قبل بدئهم في الخدمة. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن لا يوجد ارتباط بين متغير العلم بالموضوع ومتغير الرغبة في تدريس اللغة العربية لدىهم. تحديد نتائج الدراسة أيضاً أن هناك علاقة قوية بين متغير العلم بالموضوع ومتغير معرفة المحتوى التربوي لدى المعلمين ما قبل الخدمة في تدريس اللغة العربية، وتشي يرى الدراسة بتحسين أداء معلمي ما قبل الخدمة بدرجة البكالوريوس في تخصص اللغة العربية والتربيه، وذلك لتعزيز مستوى الاستعداد في فترة تدريب المعلمين. وتأمل هذه الدراسة أن تساعد المعلمين في المدارس لاستفادة منها لاسيما في التخطيط المنهجي، وكذلك كليات التربى في الجامعات لتصميم مناهج أكثر شمولًا وتماسكاً في المستقبل، وذلك من أجل إعداد أفضل معلمي اللغة العربية قبل بدئهم في مهنة التدريس.
I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and qualify, as a dissertation for degree of Master of Education (Teaching of Arabic to Non-Arabic Speakers).

................................................
Arifin Mamat
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and qualify, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Education (Teaching of Arabic to Non-Arabic Speakers).

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Examiner

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Head, Department of Language and Literacy

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Nik Ahmad Hisham Ismail
Dean, Kulliyyah of Education
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Nor Khalila binti Azizan

Signature: ………………………… Date: ……………………………
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Affirmed by Nor Khalila binti Azizan.

…………………………………
Signature

…………………………………
Date
To

My beloved husband, Mohd Sabri b. Ab Razak

My beloved parents, Azizan b. Mohamed Desa and Meriam bt Abdullah


And, all my dearest friends.

Your love, prayers, support and encouragement pave the way that enabled me to reach this destination.
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**Vowels and Diphthongs**

| Short | a | َا | i | َِ | u | َو |
| Long | ā | ًا | ī | ًِ | ū | ًو |
| Diphthong | ay | اَي | aw | او |
CHAPTER ONE
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION
Teaching has been one of the challenging professions especially with the increasing demand in the 21st century. Effective teaching process has become a crucial issue in facilitating the main goal of teaching. According to Brown (1980), teaching is “showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study or something, providing with knowledge and causing to know or understand something”. Sufean Hussin (2004) claims that teaching profession closely relates to the abilities and efforts to fulfill the responsibilities toward students, schools, and communities. He further clarifies that among the focus of the effectiveness in this profession are the effectiveness of teaching, knowledge, and teachers’ attitude towards teaching in schools.

In attempting to see the prospects and challenges of the 21st century education, and to counter the increasing of global competitions, teachers need to be fitted with an array of knowledge, ranging from generic skills such as analytical and problem-solving skills. In addition, they should also adopt personal and interpersonal communication skills, management, negotiation and organizational sciences together with the power to use these skills in a range of unique situations (Joshi & Chugh, 2009).

Many people have explored the teaching of the Arabic language since the days of the Islamic Scholars such as Hamzah Sumatrani and Abdul Rauf Singkel in the 16th or 17th century. However, at that time, teaching and learning Arabic was informal. In fact, they did not provide any formal degree or certificate for the Arabic language.
teachers and learners. However, since Malaysia became independent in 1957 until today, most of its educational institutions have taught the Arabic language formally. The establishment of The College of Malaya on 1955, which was two years before Malaysia became Independent was a catalyst for development of teaching and learning in the Arabic language after 1957. For the first time, the Ministry of Education officially introduced the subject of the Arabic language in 1977 to the National Religious Secondary Schools (SMKA) and Sultan Alam Shah Islamic College as its principal in order to progress the development of the Arabic language in educational institutions in Malaysia.

As we can see today, the Arabic language is in quite a demand by the society. Hence, its teaching and learning are taken seriously especially by students studying the Arabic language and Religious Studies. According to Malaysia’s former Prime Minister, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the teaching of the Arabic language should expand to cater for all Muslim students (BERNAMA, 5 April 2012). Hence, educators who are responsible in teaching the Arabic language should be able to teach their students using proper strategies and techniques in order to facilitate perfect teaching-learning process. According to researchers from National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in United States advocated in order to develop those strategies and techniques, “The teachers need to be ready both in physical and mental preparations before teaching”. They also claim that readiness in teaching must come first and teachers are responsible to carry out the work of transmitting knowledge in an excellent manner of teaching.

The topic of whether teachers are adequately prepared to face a dramatic shift of student demography in Malaysia has received a great deal of attention in the literature of teacher education. Every student deserves to learn from an effective
teacher. Therefore, teachers should be utmost ready to transmit their knowledge towards students. Perceived readiness among pre-service teachers denotes that they are ready in reality. It is evident that, teachers’ feeling of being ready is important to their ability to execute a behavior (Giallo and Litle, 2003).

Several decades of researches have clearly demonstrated the teachers’ readiness on the teaching other languages but the research was intended to examine the pre-service teachers’ readiness on the teaching of the Arabic language by investigating their readiness in term of their Knowledge of the Subject Area (KSA), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and Interest in teaching.

In the teaching perspective, David Strahan (2010) claims that the pre-service teachers should master the knowledge that they are subjected to teach and must be well prepared to teach the content. Teachers have to ensure that knowledge transmits correctly and appropriately. The teacher must have already mastered the profound body of knowledge and have effective skills to impart his or her knowledge “in the most accessible way possible” (Brick, 1991, p.155). Thus a good teacher is one who knows what is useful and important to the students, has an in depth knowledge of the students’ level, carefully prepares lessons, has all the correct answers at all times, and dissects, presents and explains knowledge in a masterly manner to ensure ease of learning by the students. It is a common belief that a teacher must assume a directive role, having the sole prerogative in deciding what to teach and exerting complete control over the class all times (Tang & Absalom, 1998). This is to ensure that class events are fully predictable, to guarantee the smooth delivery of carefully planned contents, and to give a sense of security to both teachers and students. Furthermore, language teachers are those who have mastered morphology, syntax, lexis, and
Pedagogical Content Knowledge is another very important factor that contributes to effective teaching-learning process. The concept of PCK is not new. The term gained renewed emphasis with Lee Shulman (1986), pointing that some teacher education researchers are interested in expanding and improving knowledge on teaching and teacher preparation, but, in his view, ignored questions dealing with the content of the lessons taught. He argued that developing general pedagogical skills was insufficient for preparing content teachers, as was education that stressed only content knowledge. In his view, the key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching rested at the intersection of content and pedagogy (Shulman, 1986). An appropriate definition of pedagogy is systematized instruction or principles that promote student learning. In order to shape professional teacher-to-be, one must utilize the entire concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge and the principles of general education pedagogy that in return affects the students’ ability to learn effectively. The pre-service teachers must get ready with their capabilities in order to discover which pedagogical techniques are most effective in transmitting the knowledge towards students.

Another aspect of teachers’ readiness for teaching professionally is that they must cope and prepare themselves with the feeling of interest towards teaching. One very important factor, among several others, is the feeling of interest that becomes a great criterion for teacher of any language as their profession (Faniran & Olatunji, 2011). In addition, only the person who has interest and love for a language would go to great lengths to master it comprehensively and sufficiently before transmitting the knowledge to the fellow students. From the psychological perspective, the feeling of
interest is the type of emotion that represents experiences like fascination, curiosity, intrigue, excitement, and wonder, and shares a conceptual space with challenge and intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Therefore, the researcher believes that this criterion is one of the important areas to be an educator. According to Norazman and Fazziana (2011), other than having knowledge and skills, interest in teaching the subject is also important and required. This implies that interest will influence the teachers in doing something consciously or unconsciously as reported by Crow and Crow (1980) in that teaching process. Furthermore, Crow (1980) believed that interest is the main power that maintains someone’s career.

Therefore, investigating the TASL pre-service teachers’ perceived level of readiness in KSA, PCK, and Interest towards teaching of the Arabic language subjects would indicate whether they are ready to teach the subject later on.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In order to achieve the national mission, the government has emphasized the focus on education system as part of the important aspects. The focus includes improving the teaching profession in the early stage of being a teacher, which is at the teacher-training programme. The Pelan Induk Pembangunan Pendidikan (PIPP) stated that the PIPP focuses on improving the teaching profession through increasing their quality and qualification.

Recently, some critics have questioned the role of teacher preparation as a key to teacher effectiveness. As we can see nowadays, there are many problems arising, which mainly relate to the trainee teachers’ failure in teaching effectively in classrooms due to their lack of subject competence (Bowers, 1987). The teaching and
learning process seems poorly accomplished, in contrast to the educational principles requirement (Intakhab, 2010). Therefore, it is very important that teachers are well prepared in their mental and physical aspects so that the progress of the teaching and learning process runs effectively.

Apart from the problem above, a number of studies found that a novice teacher (a teacher with less than 3 years of teaching experience) faces problems such as inadequate teaching preparation and teaching professionalism (Dropkin & Taylor, 1963; Kennedy, Cruishanks & Myers, 1976; Rapp, 1986; Sandige, 1989).

Throughout its research, the National Academy of Education in United States (NCATE) indicated that high quality teacher preparation has helped candidates develop essential knowledge and teaching skills. NCATE also found that unprepared teachers often ended up blaming the students for their own lack of skills.

Some scholars (An, Kulm, & Wu, 2014; Marks, 1990) accept that knowledge of subject matter and knowledge of pedagogy are imperative in teachers. Other than having knowledge and skills, Crow and Crow (1980) advocated that the feeling of interest in teaching is important in maintaining a person’s career.

While there are numerous studies conducted on pre-service teachers’ readiness on the teaching especially in the English language, there is relatively little research conducted on pre-service teachers’ readiness on the teaching of the Arabic language. Therefore, the researcher intends to investigate the pre-service teachers’ readiness on the teaching of the Arabic language based on three important ideas; Knowledge of the Subject Area (KSA); Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), and Interest. Since the main purpose of the pre-service teachers’ programme is to enable all the pre-service teachers to perform all the theories and teaching skills that have been exposed to them throughout the programme, the present study investigates their readiness on that three
areas before they go to the real teaching post. The researcher hopes that the pre-service teachers can transmit their knowledge to the students very well and are able to apply the theories and practical knowledge that they have gained when performing their job later.

### 1.3 PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study are:

1. To explore the perceived level of readiness in terms of Knowledge of Subject Area (KSA) among the final year Bachelor Degree of the Arabic language with Education pre-service teachers in the teaching of Arabic language.

2. To determine the perceived level of readiness in terms of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) among the final year Bachelor in the Arabic language Education pre-service teachers.

3. To investigate the pre-service teachers’ level of interest in the teaching of the Arabic language. (final year, Bachelor in the Arabic language with Education)

4. To measure the association between the pre-service teachers’ readiness in their Knowledge of Subject Area, and their Interest in teaching the Arabic language.

5. To measure the pre-service teachers’ readiness in terms of teaching the language and to determine the association between the pre-service teachers’ Knowledge of Subject Area and their Pedagogical Content Knowledge.
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of readiness in terms of Knowledge of Subject Area (KSA) on the teaching of the Arabic language among pre-service teachers?

2. What is the level of readiness in terms of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) on the teaching of the Arabic language among pre-service teachers?

3. What is the level of interest on the teaching of the Arabic language among pre-service teachers?

4. Is there any significant relationship between pre-service teachers’ readiness on Knowledge of Subject Area and Interest on the teaching of the Arabic language?

5. Is there any significant relationship between pre-service teachers’ readiness on Knowledge of Subject Area and Pedagogical Content Knowledge on the teaching of the Arabic language?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Firstly, the researcher hopes that the findings of this study will benefit the Faculty of Education by upgrading or upholding the academic module or system for Bachelor in the Arabic language with Education undergraduates.

Secondly, it is hoped that the result of the current study may aid the Educational Institutions by upgrading educational standard of an institution to improve the quality of teacher education and bring up the level of educational institutions as well.

Furthermore, the results and suggestions or recommendations of the study may facilitate the production of great teacher candidates, who are dedicated and seriously
committed to their jobs. Generally, the community in the educational field especially for the Arabic language teachers, as well as students will benefit from the study. They may use this study as a base to enhance their knowledge and skills, knowing what to expect when they teach the Arabic language subject. In addition, they may share some ideas on how to prepare themselves for teaching the subject in schools later on. John W. Santrock (2011) in his book “Educational Psychology” claimed that effective teachers have good command of their subject matter and a solid core of teaching skill.

1.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY
There is some delimitation to this research study. The study is limited in its findings in the following ways:

1. The sample involves only final year undergraduate students who possess Bachelor Degree in the Arabic language with Education in Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI).

2. The researcher also restricted this study to the investigation of teacher readiness in terms of: (1) Knowledge of the Subject Area (Arabic language) (2) Pedagogical Content Knowledge and (3) Interest in the teaching of Arabic language.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS
1. Pre-service teachers
All the final year undergraduate students from Bachelor Degree in Arabic language with Education programme in Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Tanjung Malim, Perak Darul Ridzuan. They have just finished their teaching practicum at
seventh semester of their studies. Currently, they are undergoing their final semester in UPSI.

2. Readiness

It is the state or level of quality of being ready or prepared to go to the teaching world with the complete knowledge as an educator. The present study intends to explore the pre-service teachers’ readiness in these three areas before posting to teaching at any education institutions or schools. The selected areas to explore are as follows:
   a) The Knowledge of Subject Area (Arabic language),
   b) Pedagogical Content Knowledge and
   c) Pre-service teachers’ interest in the teaching of Arabic language.

3. Knowledge of Subject Area (KSA)

It refers to the pre-service teachers’ knowledge of the Arabic language subjects. There are two main components of Arabic language: linguistic and literature. The linguistics of Arabic provides students with a concise overview of the language's structure and its various components: its phonology, morphology and syntax. Meanwhile, the Arabic literature mainly discussed about the literary works from the classical to modern period.

4. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

According to Shulman (1987), the meaning of (PCK) is the art of teaching and transmitting the knowledge effectively. For example the used of concept of approach or principles, methods and techniques which are mutually and hierarchically related in Arabic language teaching process.
5. Interest

The concept of Interest is both as an individual predisposition and as a psychological state. As for this study, psychological state is the feeling of interest which been characterized by focused attention, increased cognitive and affective functioning, and persistent effort in teaching Arabic language.