



THE *SILENT WAY* METHOD IN LEARNING ARABIC

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ABSTRACT

The Silent Way method (*al-tharīqah al-Shāmitah*) was discovered by a language learning expert named Caleb Gattegno (1972), who applied philosophy and cognitivism principles in his learning. This study aims to determine the extent to which the Silent Way method can be used in learning Arabic. This research was conducted by library research by collecting some empirical documents. The results of this study reveal that in using the Silent Way method, an educator must speak a little during the learning process in class. But that does not mean not doing anything during the learning process. Using various learning media, this method is based on a rule that educators should be silent so that students can express their opinions as widely as possible.

Keywords: The *Silent Way* Method, Learning, Arabic

1. INTRODUCTION

In learning Arabic, educators can convey lecture material to students. Through educators, students will gain knowledge which will then be used as a provision for their skills and expertise in learning Arabic. For this knowledge to be well understood by students, educators need an appropriate way to be accepted by students. Educators can use approaches, methods and strategies in learning Arabic.

In learning Arabic, to achieve the objectives set, educators must use appropriate learning methods. Without a proper way, the delivery of lecture material by educators will not be carried out effectively and efficiently. Even Mahmud Yunus in Zulmardi argues that method is more important than material (Zulmardi, 2009).

This opinion of Mahmud Yunus needs attention, bearing in mind that in the past, there was an opinion that mastering material was more important. Mastery of the material guarantees that someone can teach knowledge to anyone. Even so, the reality shows that someone who has mastered specific knowledge often encounters obstacles in conveying this knowledge effectively and efficiently. (Arsyad, 2010).

This shows that the use of appropriate and liked methods needs to be prioritized so that lecture material is easily understood and accepted by students even though the material could be more enjoyable. Ramayulis stated that the use of methods in the teaching and learning process depended entirely on the interests of the students (Ramayulis, 1998).

Learning Arabic requires appropriate, attractive and exciting methods. It is intended that students can learn the Arabic language quickly and interestingly to learn. In determining the learning method to be used, one thing that educators must understand is the characteristics of their students. Because by applying appropriate learning methods, it will make the learning process run effectively (Wibowo, 2021).

According to Mahmud Yunus, the method is the path an educator takes in conveying subject matter that has been planned before entering class and carried out in style. Therefore, Mahmud Yunus believes that an educator must use an appropriate, effective and efficient method to avoid getting tired or bored quickly. (Yunus, 2006).

There are various methods of learning Arabic. Each method has advantages and disadvantages. Educators can use multiple forms in the learning process according to students' characteristics and learning objectives. Among the methods that can be used in learning Arabic is the Silent Way method (*al-tharīqah al-Shāmitah*). This study aims to determine the extent to which the Silent Way method can be used in learning Arabic.

2. METHOD

In this study, the method used was Library Research (Library Research) which relied on a bibliography in the form of journals or books related to the topic. Literature study is an activity to obtain information and data from various materials in the library, such as documents, laws, notes, magazines, historical stories and so on. (Mardalis, 1999) To gain several perspectives on the topic being researched. (Sarwono, 2006). The data sources for the study are books and journals related to the Silent Way method. Documents are collected in several stages: 1) reading and studying literature, references or library materials that correlate and support the Silent Way method. 2) Record essential things expected to find relevant and sustainable studies using the Silent Way method. 3) record and enter the data obtained into the data analysis instrument. 4) perform generalization of data analysis. 5) describe generalizations according to the context of Arabic language education. From all the data collected, a critical and in-depth analysis was carried out through data triangulation techniques, including reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Silent Way method (*al-tharīqah al-Shāmitah*) was coined by Caleb Gattegno (1972), a language teaching expert who applies the principles of cognitivism and philosophy in his teaching. Gattegno made the concept of Stevick's Philosophy (1979) the basic idea to bring up this method. Like other methods, Gattegno uses his understanding of the first language learning process as the basis for establishing principles for teaching foreign languages to adults. Gattegno recommends that learners return to the way babies learn. Learners are given ample opportunity to think without too strict teacher control. In the book *Making Connection* (1994), Renate and Caine report that excessive control from educators can reduce learning effectiveness. They say that learners must have choice and variety. If you want students to be more self-motivated, they must be allowed to focus on their areas of interest and participate in activities that they find attractive (Jensen, 2008).

In his book *Choice Theory* (1999), William Glasser said that the more students feel controlled, the less they will like them. Dislike expressed and manifested in the form of frustration, rebellion, and anger, as well as latent and displayed in the form of indifference, sabotage, and apathy, will undoubtedly interfere with learning. Harter in Jensen suggests that students who feel they have no control over the assigned work will be restrained and give the slightest effort they have (Jensen, 2008: 176).

Gattegno has developed several tools for the early stages of language learning, including cubes of various sizes and colours, pictures, worksheets, charts that show the function of words and diagrams that explain the sounds and pronunciation of the language in one panorama. Several other tools are also beneficial, for example, the body parts of educators or students, such as facial cues and head and hand movements (gestures). Finger movements help students correct their mistakes rather than depending on the teacher's reprimand. This will make students more independent because they find new things, gradually understand their mistakes and try to correct them. However, how these tools are used in learning is more critical than these various tools.

The Silent Way is not merely a language learning method. Gattegno sees language learning through the Silent Way as controlling one's potential and strength. Gattegno's goal is to learn a second language and individual spiritual sensitivity and strength education. The general purpose of the Silent Way is to teach learners how to learn languages. The skills developed through learning a foreign language or a second language can be used to learn everything that is unknown (Pint, 2013).

This method trains students' skills in using foreign languages learned orally so that they can achieve fluency almost the same as native speakers. Silent Way also introduces students' skills in listening to the other person's speech. Listening is seen as quite a complex element, primarily if native speakers deliver the language, so you should be careful in listening and do it repeatedly. This method also trains students to be able to master practical grammar. Grammar is given gradually with an inductive process and highlights verbal concepts sparingly (Hermawan, 2011).

The silent method encourages students to use language with their expressions in expressing thoughts, perceptions, and feelings (Larsen, 2000). To do so, they need freedom from educators to get the criterion of truth from themselves. Learners become free by depending on themselves. Educators then only provide assistance that is needed to support learning.

Five steps can be used in teaching Arabic (Hermawan, 2011), namely:

The first step is the introduction. Educators provide props in the form of; (a) a display board that reads the material (field chart). This board contains the spelling of all the syllables in the foreign language being studied; (b) wooden sticks/blocks (Cuisenaire rods). The sticks are usually ten different sizes and colours, for example, red, blue, brown, black, green, yellow, white, red, rose, and grey. The longest stick is 10x1 cm, and the shortest is 1x1 cm. These sticks will later be used as props in forming complete sentences.

In the second step, the educator presents an understood language item. The presentation is only one

time. Thus he forces the students to listen carefully. In the beginning, the teacher did not say anything but just pointed at the symbols on the display board. Students pronounce the symbol designated by the educator by reciting it out loud, initially simultaneously. Then on the teacher's instructions, the students recite them one by one. This step is the initial stage.

In the third step, the educator presents a second display board containing the selected vocabulary after the students can pronounce the sounds in the foreign language being studied. This vocabulary is taken from sentences that are most often used in everyday communication, for example surrounding objects, colours, numbers, location of objects, and so on. These vocabulary words will be handy for students in constructing sentences independently. This step is still in the early stages because it is only in the form of practising vocabulary pronunciation, and he has yet to be instructed to make complete sentences independently.

In the fourth step, the teacher uses the colourful sticks provided to lure students into speaking the foreign language being studied. At this point, the educator raises the stick and says, for example:

هذا العصا حمراء

After that, the teacher raises another stick of a different colour, for example:

هذا العصا زرقاء

After that, the teacher asks one of the students to come forward and show another block, for example:

خذ العصا الخضراء

Then the student said

هذا العصا خضراء

After that, the student is asked to do and say the same thing to another friend, and so on. Thus students will be stimulated to make complete sentences orally with words they have mastered before. In this case, using the correct sign is essential instead of verbal explanations.

Many sentence constructions can be taught with the stick, for example, the sentences below:

العصا الحمراء طويلة

العصا الحمراء أطول من العصا الزرقاء

العصا الخضراء أقصر من العصا السوداء

The teacher gradually says as little as possible, while the students do the opposite by trying to avoid using their language. However, the situation remains under the teacher's non-verbal supervision. If it is possible to develop vocabulary, educators can use other appropriate visual aids, such as natural objects, pictures, or worksheets.

In the fifth step in closing, educators can test students' success in mastering the vocabulary taught by giving commands that are as non-verbal as possible, as in point number 4 above. In this test, of course, you have to pay attention to the time available; it is impossible that, with limited time, the test can be given to all students.

Like other methods, the Silent Way method also has advantages and disadvantages. According to Fachrurrozi (2016), there are four advantages of this method, namely:

1. The tasks and activities in this method encourage and shape student responses so that the class is not passive.
2. Student responses are provoked without verbal instructions from educators and without giving examples of repeated sentences. Because the model is given once, students who are not listening will be encouraged to listen to the next "model".
3. Students are encouraged to make new utterances by combining the utterances they have learned with those they have just learned.
4. Because there are no corrections and explanations given when students make mistakes, and there are no explanations, students are encouraged to make their analogies with cars to draw conclusions and formulate rules.

According to Fachrurrozi (2016), there are three weaknesses in this method, namely:

1. In practice, this method is similar to the Audio-lingual method, with a strong focus on repeating utterances or sentences without errors.
2. Educators cultivate student autonomy by providing choices in the situations it presents. However, in reality, the teacher controls the material and teaching methods in the classroom. In other words, the class is still teacher-centred or oriented.
3. Most examples are for beginner foreign language learners, although Gattegno stated that this method could be used to teach reading and writing.

4. CONCLUSION

The Silent Way method (*al-tharīqah al-Shāmitah*) was discovered by a language learning expert named Caleb Gattegno (1972), who applied philosophy and the principles of cognitivism in his learning. The name of this method indicates that an educator must speak a little during the learning process in class; the role of the educator is not to convey knowledge, not to be a model or provider of answers. However, educator intervention is allowed, for example, to direct students' attention to how they learn.

The Silent Way method (*al-tharīqah al-Shāmitah*) cannot be understood that educators do nothing in the learning process. This method requires various learning media. Because there are

vocabularies that can be explained using media images, and there are abstract meaningful vocabularies that are difficult to explain using media images. This method is based on the principle that educators should be silent so students can express their opinions as broadly as possible. Students carry out their language learning process in class. This method also respects and recognizes differences in students' abilities in learning Arabic and remembering information independently, without verbalization and minimal assistance from educators.

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