

# **The Concept of Recitation (Hafazan) and Rational in Teaching and Learning in Western and Islamic Perspective**

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**Abstract**-Islamic world was once well known for its prominence of the sciences which caused by the combination between rational and recitation (hafazan) dimension in Islamic studies. This combination has brought a dynamic and rapid progress in Islamic studies in facing life challenges at that time. It reached its glorious triumph between 750 to 1258 AD. However, this field has received many criticisms with scoff and hope to get back the glorious era. This paper will talk about the important ideas inside the criticism and bring the discussion to the concept of recitation and rational thought dimension through Islamic and Western perspective. It will explain the principal element towards recitation and rational from Islamic and Western perspective as well. Qualitative study with analytical and thematic approach becomes the principle of the convincing scientific conclusion. The result has brought the fact that there are clear distinctions between these two perspectives, especially when it is seen from metaphysical side that Western party doesn't hold the metaphysical as the matter of their principle while Islamic perspective make belief and spiritual aspects as their principle for the recitation and rational thought dimension.

**Keywords:** recitation, civilization, education, belief

## **1.0 Introduction**

Western civilization began to grow fast after the growth of science in the Eastern world flowed to the Western world through two eras, which are the era of Classic and Modern. Abdul Rahman (2002) explained that the stream of the science from Eastern world to Greece in the Classic era became the basis of the existence of Western civilization. Whereas in Modern era, he had set off Renaissance movement in Italy before it grew to all Europe. In this period of time, world domination of the West can be seen from the invention of technology and their ideology which has crossed the international borders since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This domination brought changes in education, economy and social aspects in the world (Mohammad Razi and Mohammad Ilyas 2006). The West domination in many aspects has created a perception that Western party can become the best precedent and the only reference of material and thought aspect. This situation became a bash for Islam people when they are compared to Westerner; as if they were seen as people who can't fight, who are weak, not competitive, and not able to lead and give best solutions for the life problems of people which are getting more complicated.

The image of the weakness and scarcity has caused many studies and seminars which are done by Islamic scholars in order to understand and improve the quality of Islam people, especially in the aspect of education. This aspect is one of the important factors of the initial cause of the people's weakness, particularly in teaching and learning. One of the seminars which talk about this issue is international congress which was held in Makkah in 1977. The congress had gathered 315 scientists and academic experts, including Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail al-Faruqi that are the name behind the renewal of Islamic education in 20<sup>th</sup> century (Azyumardi 1998:23). The result of the descriptive research has known that the aspect of recitation and rational thought in teaching and learning methods of Islamic study is one of the elements that are often being discussed in order to improve learning results. The weakness of understanding both elements is to give impression towards the level of intelligence and students' understanding in the subject they learn. This problem is, perhaps, caused by

the confusion of meaning of recitation and rational thought which at the end of the day become the cause of controversy in putting the element of rational thought in proper field of Islamic study. In connection with it, the discussion in this paper is focused on terminology of recitation and rational thought according to the perspective of Islam and Western, especially in education. Furthermore, categorizing the concept of recitation and rational thought through Islamic and Western perspective become the initial step in understanding and answering these problems. This study also aims to know exactly the integration between the element of recitation and rational thought of teaching and learning in Islamic tradition.

## **2.0 Criticism towards Islamic study**

Islam civilization has ever taste its glory era for its education in Abbasiyyah's era, but eventually his time collapses either. Many plans and efforts have been done by Islam scientists in order to restore the glory are like holding international Islamic Education Congress in 1977. The congress result some important resolutions in Islamic education, such as realizing Islamic university which could only be done in Malaysia in 1984. The following of the first congress has resulted more discussion and effort of improvement of Islamic education in 1990s and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, similar to *Conference on Towards Construction of a Contemporary Islamic Educational Theory* in 1990, IIT recommendation and Yarmouk University in Jordan, *International Conference on Islam and Higher Education* in 2010 in IAIS, Kuala Lumpur and *International Conference on Reforms in Islamic Knowledge* in 2011 in Cambridge University. This situation symbolizes the availability and openness of academicians in sharing and discussing about issues of Islamic education in some levels of studies, whether on Western or Eastern academics. However, in reality the rally of discussion and resolution about issues of Islamic education, including Islamic study is not parallel with the application and experience in educational institutions, in another word the experience is not always as well as how it was discussed in trials or seminars. This situation invites some basis criticisms which have been uttered by scholars and contemporary Islam thinkers, such as M. Natsir (1979), Rosnani Hashim (1996), Mumtaz Ali (1998), Mona Abaza (2002), Siddiq Fadzil (2003), Fauzi Hamat (2007), Sidek Baba (2011) dan Mohd Hairudin (2012). Their criticisms about Islamic study are very broad, but their ideas about factors that contribute in this phenomenon can be concluded into four, which are 1) exam-oriented phenomenon, 2) the dilemma of Islamic study on between the need of typical method of teaching and learning and the lack of emphasize of spiritual and moral elements in enliven the spirits and scholar values of Islam.

### **2.1 Exam oriented assessment**

Academic evaluation based on the result of assessment is one of the primary features which makes somebody proper to be judged smart or the otherwise in education. However, this kind of system has caused the real orientation of education shifted into the effort only to get the best assessment result, as what has been reviewed by Yuanzi (2011). This situation has created exam oriented phenomenon in students and showed the orientation of education feels more testing than educating (Siddiq 2007:96). Rosnani Hashim (1996) has asserted that the focus of learning which has educational concept give negative impression towards students of Islamic study since they are not able to act analytically, critically, and ready in giving good responses to face current problems, instead according to Mahayuddin (1986), they are seen fathoming Islam in context of getting job after they finish their study. This reality is also supported by Wan Mohd Mor (1997), if the students look more emphasizing the practice of recitation and put the understanding aside, also gouged the meaning instead of the matter which has been learnt before exam period. This condition has finally made the element of rational thought cannot be fulfilled immediately in teaching and learning process. This phenomenon occurs later than giving indirect impression towards meritocracy system which is implemented in educational system, starting on the level of schools to streamline and improve the quality of education in order to produce competitive people in labour market.

## 2.2 The obscure scope of Islamic study

The objective of teaching and learning in Islamic study is on dilemma in fulfilling the need to produce academic excel and marketability graduates in work place. The evaluation towards assessment which as usual for Islamic study is done for three to five years makes this field faces the dilemma of two issues above. According to Fauzi Hamat (2007), this issue needs one clear answer and decision about the main matter which is wanted to be inherited to the students of Islamic study in institution of higher education. He queries the objective, only for getting a good job after graduate, self-reformation, acknowledgement, and only to be on the level of specialization. The distinction of the objectives gives impression towards the teaching and learning method in lectures or tutorials, whether only for reaching the objective or as the preparation to be an expert who will support the field he learns. This situation is added more with understanding of Islamic Studies which are still seen by society and student as very limited fields. They see that Islamic studies is dysfunctional in certain fields and only limited to spirituality aspect, while actually Islam is an universal religion, and it crosses many fields and thoughts.

This condition, according to Muhammad (2005), needs an explanation about the scope and subject of Islamic studies cross all subjects to fulfil the need of technology and globalization era. This is based on product of Islamic studies which is applied so far and focused on human capital, not in the material form which has become the measure of achievement in this technology era. Therefore, synchronization of the scope and subject of Islamic studies completely in institution of Islamic studies is much needed. Although there are efforts, like the idea of Islamization which become the philosophy of the establishment of international Islamic University of Malaysia and Fiqh Malaysia in Islamic Academy in Malaysia University, but each has their own styles. It makes the direction of Islamic studies somewhat obscure in fulfilling two demands, loyalty in the clarity of the mission of Islamic science and education and the openness in fulfilling current needs.

This factor is also supported by academic experts such as Hassan Langgulung (2002) and Siddiq (2003), if they say that the mission of education from reality side is more inclined to commercialization, although from the ideal side which is based on National Education Philosophy is to produce individuals who are balance in the aspect of physical, spiritual, mental, and intelligence. National Education Philosophy is also being criticized and critically discussed when the ideal mission and vision cannot compete with the experience and practice in educational institution. According to Reato Constantino (1996) in his research entitled *Globalization and the Intellectual Tradition*, he said that institutions of higher education first shifted towards non-liberal phenomenon tenet which is holding on to anything truly good must be able to make profit that as if putting aside the solemn function of its social as the generator of academic brilliance until decreasing the scholar's value and principal. To Subri (1980), the institution of higher education also does not have a clear agreement in deciding whether Islamic studies education and this problem is the main problem. This problem about the obscurity of the direction of Islamic studies give more negative impact in general towards the strategy and way to execute the objective, also teaching and learning method in university and negative impact particularly towards students.

## 2.3 Typical method of P&P

Islamic studies world needs the method of teaching and learning (P&P) which makes impression, has energy and power to make adjustments with current needs. According to the criticisms given by Islam scholars such as Maududi (1962), Syed Naquib (1980) dan Ismail Faruqi (1987), P&P method in this field is not very effective and dynamic. This fact is supported by some other Islam and Western scholars and thinkers like Muhammad Qutb (1997) dan Bradely (1999). Qutb argues that religion students have eventually changed from thinker to memorizer. It begins from the emphasizing which is given for reciting method like what is used in many Islam countries. While the aspect of ability to think about Islam is not given enough emphasize. At the end of the day, they are known more as scholars for what they memorize on texts, lecture and notes so that they are not able to think

individually, or having the courage and faith in stating their own argument and perspective in an issue.

Effective teaching and learning take into account the understanding (*tafahhum*) as the main objective. Understanding is the peak of the learning process. Understanding principle has to be followed with the way of thinking. According to Majid Ersan Kersani (1997), recitation and understanding without the tradition of thinking will not result in creative, critical, and reflective mind. According to Siddiq (2002), the students of Islamic studies indirectly practice closed mind on seeing the other which causes a group who opposes modernization. It also contributes to extremist religious movement. Therefore, the quality of teaching and learning in Islamic studies needs to be repacked and improved in order to be parallel with the current circulation in the effort to persuade and give well understanding to the students.

### **The lack of emphasize of spiritual and moral elements in enliven the spirits and scholar values of Islam.**

In the tradition of Islamic studies, knowledge and heart have a tight connection because knowledge is the light that will germinate the fruit which is practice. The former Ulama, such as al-Ghazali (1058M), Abdul Qadir (1078M) and Ibnu Qayyim (1292M) have touched aspects of heart guardiance and place heart as one of the important spiritual elements in understanding Islam. Al-Quran also stated it in as-Shu 'ara' verse 86 until 89 which sounds:

And forgive my father. Indeed, he has been of those astray. And do not disgrace me on the Day they are [all] resurrected - The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children. But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.

There is a hadith which mentioned heart as a morsel of meat that if it is good, then the body is good as well. Al-Ghazali (2002: 109) in his book entitled *Membuka Pintu Sa'adah* has asserted that a heart which is steady with faith can move the limbs in reverse. Al-Ghazali (1982) also clearly emphasized that the element of cleansing the heart as the primary requirement in scholar in the process of learning and in his writing entitled *Mizan al-'Amal* in the chapter 'Tanggung jawab murid'.

However, this aspect acquires little attention in teaching and learning of Islamic studies. Religion subjects are only seen as school subjects. According to Suzalie (2003), the scholars with the attitude of tune in and tune out in learning as if these subjects is a 'broadcast' which is interchangeable in school and tutorial time that is already appointed and finally just ended when the school is over. In the research of individual development from education aspects by Tajul Ariffin (2007), he gave perspective though idealism and reality after modernization of higher education nowadays which eventually make Islamic studies only become subject and make the concept of individual development impossible to be done. This fact is strengthened with the truth issued by Mohd Yusof (2006:69) if the good education standard has not yet guarantee the good morality, he mentioned the research which was done by Ishak Mohd Sher (2006) entitled '*Membudayakan Integriti dalam Kalangan Penjawat Awam*' that shows 30.5% of university students are ready to accept corruption in the event that they have chance to experience high crisis of etiquette when the individual development finally has to follow the world's new order law and the ideas of pure values do not become the main agenda of education anymore (Awang Sariyan: 2007).

All of the criticisms and perspective which has appear on the surface show the meaning of science in Islam is not on the theoretical aspect, or only strengthening intellectual and material values, but also refers to the education and development of human in general, including the aspect of spirituality and ability of human being to utilize their intellectual gift maximally, not only for enliven the spirit of science in Islam but also the renewal and the way to present the sciences in Islam to modern world. Therefore, Islamic education needs more effective methods of teaching and learning. Thus, this scope of the study examines the micro aspect of the maximal utilization of rational thought and balances the recitation aspect which is the principle of learning process.

### 3.0 Recitation concept from Western and Islam perspectives

#### 3.1 Recitation concept from Western perspective

Usually, recitation (hafazan) is a brain activity which is used whether directly or indirectly. However, if this dimension is seen from the education aspect, this process is more focused of direct recitation which requires long-term memory. The definition of hafazan also refers to memorization which has been given by psychologists, such as Tulving & Craik (2000), Moris dan Maisto (2002) while Warwick (2003) and Schunk (2008) is education scholars.

According to western researchers, such as Rolls (2000), Shepherd (2004) and Squire (2004), hafazan (memorization) is one of the main brain activities. Hafazan activity is classified to some categories which involve a complex and abstract mental process. Nevertheless this definition will be more open and become a topic of discussion among experts of neurology, psychology, and sociology which can be divided into five main features: recalling process, events in the past, brain as the main memory storage organ, a mind perception as a result of abstract brain process and activity, and repetitive habits.

##### a. Recalling process

According to *Brittanica's Concise Pictured Encyclopaedia 9<sup>th</sup> edition*, memorization is memory as the recalling of past experience with the realization that the experience in the past and plays constant part in thinking, learning and reasoning. The same definition is given by Tulving & Craik (2000) and Moris & Maisto (2002). Memory is an ability to memorize something that has ever been experienced, learnt, and imagined. According to these definitions, hafazan is one of the processes to recall the things that occurred whether during our consciousness or sub consciousness.

##### b. Events in the past

According to the experts of anthropology, Clime (2002:2), memory gives definition 'called for a return to be remembered (and perhaps idealized) past to a time'. The definition that has similar features is also given Piaget (1952:16), an expert in psychology, who said that a fairly direct apprehension of past associations or experiences for experienced event or episodes which naturally expressed with a direct object (Campbell 1997:106). They think that hafazan has close connection with the past, like a memory which becomes remembrance and directly forms significant experiences in someone's life.

##### c. Brain as the main memory storage organ

According to the results of the reasearch by Atkinson & Shiffin (1968) which proven that brain is the main memory storage organ that can be divided into three category: (1) *sensory-store*, is a type of memory that can store a short event only in a second (2) *short term memory*, is a longer term memory but is still limited (3) *long term memory*, is the longest type of memory which is everlasting.

According to Squire (1992:678) memory is a mental faculty which can be understood through molecular approach in brain cell and the role of hippocampus which are important as memory storage. This perspective shows that brain as the main organ to do hafazan which can be proven theoretically and empirically through hippocampus.

##### d. A mind perception as a result of abstract brain process and activity

According to Talland (1968) memories are typically based on perception more or less closely but not all the things perceived are remembered. Mok Soon Sang (2002) also said that memory or hafazan in learning means the picture or representative of learning which is the deeper process of psychology that cannot be directly measured and refers to an abstract process and activity, not apparently detected whether through organs, glands, and objects in the brain (Kenneth 1977:1). This process involves exchange of intimation to its digital form (Encoding). The storage gets or returns the intimation (Retrieval) (Charles Donald, 2004: 57).

This situation shows that hafazan is an abstract process which cannot be explained in physical form in bringing up the process of hafazan activity in the brain and can only be understood through impression and response of the research that is done to human and animal.

e. Repetitive habit

Talland (1968:16) argues that memory is actually an act which is done repeatedly though sub conscious memory, while according to Butler, Gillian, et.al (1995) habit is the result of repetitive process or ritual (Maurice Merleau 1962: 146) which in the end will be saved in memory. Therefore, hafazan is the result of conscious or sub conscious repetitive habit which eventually makes a certain thing can be memorized automatically.

Overall the definitions given by Western party in this aspect are not very distinct. One clear similarity about hafazan concept from Western perspective is it does not put metaphysical element as the basic strength to the meaning of hafazan (memorization). Western is more focused on the physical activity in introducing hafazan concept through showing the brain function as the main organ for hafazan. This main feature is only differentiated through the method or process hafazan which works in the brain through hippocampus and amygdala.

However, they cannot refuse that hafazan process is abstract and cannot be proven clearly, but it can only be detected through the output of hafazan, like what was said by Maurice (1962) and Talland (1968).

### 3.2 Recitation concept from Islamic perspective

Recitation (hafazan) is a dominant process in Arab society. They memorize thousands Arabic verses and their genealogy very well (Abdu al-Azim, 1986). This process later on continued after the arrival of Islam in Makkah when this activity is actively used among the comrades of Rasullullah S.A.W. in memorizing and reciting revelation which is given by Allah for the Him. In the era of Rasullullah S.A.W, hafazan which is very dominant among that people at that time has strength in memory durability, like memorizing important events (*al-Ayyam*) and genealogy (*al-Ansab*), but at the same time has weakness in the ability of writing and reading (Yatim 1997:29-39). This fact is supported in the books written by Rasullullah S.A.W, such as ...

Recitation process is very important in Islam in order to memorize the verses in al-Quran and hadith. Like what was said by Rasulullah "It shall be said - meaning to the one who memorized the Qur'an - 'Recite, and rise up, recite (melodiously) as you would recite in the world. For indeed your rank shall be at the last Ayah you recited'" (at-Tirmidhi: 2914). This parable shows that recitation of al-Quran is a very demanded, venerated, honoured matter to those who have the ability to read al-Quran and memorize it (al-Qardhawi 1999:191). Recitation according to Islam can be categorized to some main points:

a. Reciting and repeating process

The word *hifz* is the opposite of *an-nisyan* which means forge. The use of the word *hifz* refers to the meaning of recall and repeat in the learning of al-Quran. This term is also used by Islam scholars such as Mansour Ajami (1984), Misbah-ud-Din (2003) dan Muhammad Sajid Qasmi (2005). This fact can be seen in al-Qiyamah, verse 16 until 19:

Move not your tongue with it, [O Muhammad], to hasten with recitation of the Qur'an. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Gabriel], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you].

The wayfarer, like Hamka (1984), Ibnu Kathir (1988) dan Qurtubi (2000) interpreted this verse. It explains that Rasullullah S.A.W never stops moving both lips when reading al-Quran, since He is afraid to forget. However, when Allah gave commandment to Him with guarantee that

Rasullullah S.A.W will be given easiness in reciting it and He will never forget the verses that was given to Him. According to Maraghi's interpretation (1974), the word "*Fattabi' Quranah*" means listen and repeat until this verse can be memorized well.

The interpretation of the verses in al-Qiyamah is a proof that shows the method of learning starts in recitation. This process involves repetition and recalling of the thing that has been taught.

b. Keeping or preserving

There are some verses in al-Quran that has the word *hifz* which carries the meaning of preserving or keeping like on surah al-Hijr: 9 "Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian". According to Ibnu Kathir (1988:512) and Syed Qutb (2010:104), Allah preserves and keeps the authenticity, clarity, and rightness of the verses in al-Quran, and Muslim people also preserve the clarity through recitation the verses of al-Quran, writing, putting into book form, and even revising if there are mistakes and confusing matters in the holy verses of al-Quran. Moreover, recitation in the context of Islam is taken from Arabic term which is hafazan. Its root word is *ha-fa-dzo* which is *hafz* or *hifz* that means keeping and preserving (Lisanul Arab 2003). Therefore, the people who recite al-Quran preserve It at the same time.

c. The process that involves spiritual aspect

Islam also emphasizes the spiritual aspect which is focused of the role and formation of clean heart in each Muslim individual. This truth is supported by what is stated in Quran Encyclopaedia (2006: 232) and by Khuram Murad's book entitled *Way to the Qur'an* (1985). *Hifz* means knowing and keeping the Quran not only in the head but also by heart, not just matter of preserving all the Words of God but also to learn them to be focused on conscious practice, on one's life according to the Quran. The person who recites al-Quran will keep it in his heart and apply the matter he recited.

Apart from that, according to as-Sabuni (1985), al-Qamati (1990) and Abu Soleh (1988), the context of teaching and learning al-Quran gives broader meaning for those who is not only admiring recitation, but of course who understand and apply the meaning. Every Muslim should have efforts to recite or, at least, read while praying particular times if are not able to recite the whole al-Quran.

The importance of understand and apply the verses in al-Quran also can be seen in Ibnu Taimiyyah's book entitled *Majmu' al-Fatawa* (1960). He said that the comrades who read al-Quran like Uthman bin Affan and Abdullah bin Mas'ud will only learn ten verses, while Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. will do it gradually. They will not add it, so that they know the meaning and the application. They say: We learn al-Quran, knowledge and application integrated because they need time to understand al-Quran.

According to the fact that was noted by Ibnu Taimiyyah that shows reciting is not merely memorizing, even memorizing is a process of repeating, while reciting aims to keep the thing that is being memorized, rather than lost or forgotten. Therefore, recitation process begins with reading and repeating.

The conclusion can be pulled out that the term memorization and recitation have different purposes but still have close connection. The distinction is very thin, but recitation is more to the term that is used in education, while memorization is more general. If we compare between the Islam and Western perspective, recitation dimension according to Western is more to the mental activity which involves more brain use. While recitation dimension from Islam perspective involves the spiritual aspect and heart activity which is abstract and better known as one of the religious elements.

## 4.0 Rational concept from Western and Islam perspectives

### 4.1 Rational concept from Western perspective

Rational have close connection with the term logic. Logic came from the word *logos* in Greece which means thought or the statement of thought (M.Ali 1992:1). According to Kirk, Raven & Schofield (1983) stream of thought which anchored on rational thought begin since Greece era from a thinker at that time, Heraclitus, who believe that cosmic nature was created for a reason. This stream later on reached its peak through the role of Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle. Through logical science principle which was founded by Socrates and Plato which later on was improved by Aristotle that made logic a systematic science. This science kept developing until Hellenistic era (323-146 B.C.) and the age of

Rome Empire (27 B.C-476 A.D). However, the conflicts of Godliness on the era of The Great Constantine had contributed the declining of Western world that caused Dark Ages. The effect of this conflict is the Western world revived and started the recovery movement by separating religious element from life.

According to the background of this rational thought, there are two main features of this concept from Western perspective that are mental process that involves some mental activities and thought which is based on fact and logic.

a. Mental process that involves some mental activities

According to Gwyn, Brian & Berry (2002) and Boyer (1990) rational thought is an ability in reasoning and manipulating mental that is one of the commonly used terms in solving problem, brain cognitive process which involve inference and making conclusion or decision. Rational thought also have close connection with critical thinking (Ann Margaret 1996:89). Bloom(1956) said that rational thought is a mental activity which covers up analytic, synthetic, and assessing element beside using proof that can be seen in making conclusion (Karl Albrecht 2007:291). This situation shows that this activity cannot be detected outwardly, but can be proven through the impression that shows mental activity in human brain.

b. Thought which is based on fact and logic

Rational thought is also known as logical thought. Rational thought is a left brain activity. The term logic has been used since the 5<sup>th</sup> century by Heraclitus with the meaning of law and the use of rational principle in understanding the universe (Abdul Rahman 2003:64).

According to the definition given by Irving M.Copi's book *Introduction to Logic* (1972), logical thought has close relation with the reasoning and rational thought process. He said, "Reasoning is a special kind of thinking in which inference takes place in which conclusions are drawn from premises".

Nevertheless, Mosterín, Jesús (2008:318) said, "Reasoning and rationality are not the same: reason would be a psychological faculty whereas rationality is an optimizing strategy". While Robert & Kathleen (2010:172) said, "Thinking and acting in accordance with reason based on facts".

According to some definitions given, it can be concluded that logic is something that brought to verification with the help of five senses and connections between one matter and the other.

The best way in categorizing a matter is logic is through an empirical scientific research. However, Westerner does not have clear border about the limitation of the use of rational thought in daily life, including the scope of rational dimension in education. The fact can be seen through rational classic Greece history which emphasize that human have their own power to know exactly many problems that underlined trustworthy towards the ability of logic authority which unveil science and truth (Abdul Rahman 2003:154).

#### 4.2 Rational concept from Islam perspective

The concept of rational thought from Islam perspective is different with the concept of rational thought from Western perspective. Thinking came from the word *natoqa* which is formed from *nun-tho-qof* in Arabic which means speak. According to Mu'jam al-Lughah wa al-'Ulum (1974:578) logic defined as logical and rational thought which is the activity of collecting ideas and minds in the context to know, understand and solve a problem.

There are four peculiar criteria about the concept of rational thought from Islam perspective:

a. Rational thought activity that makes al-Quran and Sunnah Rasulullah S.A.W. as the main reference and first reference

Rational thought has close connection with the activity of the wits, even there are 50 words related with wits being repeated for almost 50 times as a proof that Islam honored the application and role of wits. Furthermore, sane wit is a taklif requirement and a person has to be responsible of faith and praying matter, even wits also let human to choose whether to be kufur or religious in choosing the right religion without any suppression as how Allah's commandment said:



There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing. (al-Baqarah: 256)

However, wit is not the leader and advisor towards religion since wit is His creation (Abdul Halim 2000: 9-13; M.Quraish 2005:97). The character of the wit shows that it is weak since cannot create and find its own condition whether the substance or characteristic. This weakness needs guidance from revelation and Sunnah of Rasullullah (S.A.W) in guiding and helping people over their weakness on their wit, so that it is not corrupted and become astray as the word of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. in His last sermon in 9 Zulhijjah 10 Hijrah in Uranah valley, Arafah Mountain:

Indeed I left you two matters and you will never be astray as long as you are holding on to both, al-Quran and the Sunnah. (Bukhari dan Muslim:2137)

It happened because wit has weaknesses that can affect the credibility and values of rightness since wit cannot give answer and solution towards the metaphysical matters and can be easily affected by outside and inside organizations. Wit and rational thought are tools in finding the rightness and improving faith (H.Moh&Sjafa'at 1975:67,; Kwame 1979:2).

b. Independent thought from all creatures

Islam prohibits and disgraces the group who applies blind taqliq which is the act of following or believing something without firm postulate, proof, and principle (al-Ghazali 1997:770). This fact can be proven on surah al-Baqarah, verse 170:

And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed," they say, "Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing." Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?

There are 63 verses in al-Quran which invites human to think, and 45 verses that invites human to observe, pay attention, and contemplate (Mohd Sulaiman 1982). This situation makes us sure that Islam does not limit wit ability in understanding a matter, instead Islam disgraces blind taklid which practices taking someone's word without *mulzimah* argument (al-Amidi 1347H:297) in understanding Islam dogma. This fact is supported in surah Ibrahim, the story when He looked for His master with the use of thought (M.Natsir 1981:63). This action shows that these thoughts are independent thought without interference of other creatures and human ideologies (Rahmat 1985:31) which often times are selfish.

c. The renewal which is related to the responsibility towards religion

The word *tajdid* carries a meaning of renewal in introducing and applying Islam in life matters (al-Qardhawi 1995:208) time by time. *Tajdid* needs and effort called *ijtihad*. *Ijtihad* came from the word *al-juhd* which is used in burdening human which require the whole energy (Zaidan 2006:317) to acquire syarak conviction which is *zanni* (al-Amidi 1985:218), honest effort which is done continuously in acknowledging Islamic dogma and apply it, also connect the new problems with methods form al-Quran and Sunnah (M.Quraish 2005:34).

*Ijtihad* can be divided into three categories of process, which are *ijtihad insya'I* which is done by a person to conclude the conviction about new and unsolved event, *ijtihad tarjihi* or *intiqai* which is done by a person or a group of people to decide the opinions of the former mujtahidin about particular issues (al-Qardhawi 1990:276:277), later on to choose which opinion that has stronger and relevant argumentation in that time. The third one is the combination of those two processes (al-Qardhawi 2002:189). This activity involves thought that can from concept, opinion, perspective, ideas, or

science to know something new (M.Natsir 1981: 95) in the effort to get to know the Creator and get closer to Allah. This situation also can be seen from historical facts of Islam civilization on its efforts of investigation in formulating a truth and al-Quran and Sunnah which is often done in Umayyah and Abbasiyyah era. Ijtihad is one of the proofs of Islam in recognizing rational thought in giving solution to human for the sub-problems in their attempt to apply religion dogmas in the world.

d. Aqidah (Allah's trust) overcomes empirical scientific values

The nature of the mind is to think rationally about an issue that brings doubt, like what was said by al-Ghazali: Who does not doubt does not think, who does not think will not see and who does not see are blind and misguided (Mohd Sulaiman 1982:53). Nevertheless, individual thoughts are based on their beliefs to Allah Ta'ala. This belief is known as faith in Islam. It happens because not all matters can be seen and detected by five senses since human senses are very limited. This limitation causes not every matter can be reach by our mind.

However, it does not mean that the unseen thing is something that has no physical form. For example, bacteria and some metaphysic things like what Allah said on some surah about spirits, Satan, judgment day, many more. In Islam a scientific matter is not only based only on the empirical evaluation and verification (Harun Nasution 1987:75), but also based on faith to Allah that can overcome everything. This fact has been explained by M.Quraish (2005:103) that 'Wisdom is not really wisdom. *Khiznir (boar) for example*, is a haram animal. The researchers examine the cause of that banning and give the cause of the banning is because of the dangerous tapeworm. If there is no tapeworm, is that mean the *khiznir* meat are allowed to be consumed?'

This fact explains clearly that wit cannot reach something that is detailed although that matter has been on its outward, not to mention when something unseen and undetected will become the subject of a research. Priest al-Ghazali gave a parable in telling the limitation of wit and in facing a problem if not guided and can still run away from lust:

*A man has built a castle for his son on the top of the hill which was full of fragrant grasses around the castle. The man told the child to not throw away the grasses from the castle ever. One day, he remind his child to make sure that the grasses were well and alive regardless the time. But his father's words opposed his desire after his father's death. The child thought that his father's testament was to keep the grasses just because they were fragrant. However, when the grasses were gone, a huge snake appeared. And he killed the snake. He just realized that the purpose of the grasses was not only for its fragrance, but had a more important purpose which was to keep the snakes away because of the fragrance (Abdul Halim 2000:20-21).*

Rational thought dimension between Western and Islam perspective have one clear distinction. Dimension of rational thought from Western perspective is seen as flawless and become an absolute determinant in explaining rightness in looking for a fact or meaning behind a problem. Different with rational thought from Islam has its own limitation and not the main principle in deciding rightness. Rational thought is a tool to strengthen the fact in reaching the goals to know the Creator. This obvious factor of distinction begins with the realization of trustworthy element individually. It feels like Western put the aspect of rational thought as the absolute measurement in order to say whether a thing is 'Right' or 'Wrong'. If that thing opposes the logic and cannot be proven empirically, it will be rejected. Islam perspective is the vice versa. Dimension or rational is an executor in knowing the Creator, beside as the medium to improve faith.

## **5.0 Integration of the element of recitation and rational thought in Islamic studies tradition**

The element of recitation and rational thought is an important activity in teaching and learning. According to Islam perspective, element of recitation in teaching and learning works simultaneously

and doesn't oppose one another, instead get a fair place in Islam. However not all Islam dogmas need recitation activity and not all problems in Islam need rational thought either. This situation need a guidance about criteria that emphasize towards recitation and particular features which is more focused on rational thought.

According to the principal rating of science (*maratib al-'ulum*) which say the honoured science is the sciences of revelation which are divided into fardhu Ain science and fardhu Kifayah science (Muhammad Naquib 1987:136-152). Fardhu Ain science is the science compulsory for each Muslim individual who are aqeel baliqh to know and practice it, and every violation towards the dogma will be punished as a sin. According to writer's analysis, features in fardhu 'ain which become the daily practice which has become compulsory for every Muslim and involves reading and mention about the pray that is recited when praying, knowing al-Quran alphabet and the *makhrāj* and pillars of prayers. Recitation element plays a bigger role in particular prayer. Even fardhu 'ain science is a matter of perception in Muslim individuals which become the main responsibility for every Muslim to preserve it. The situation which parallel with recitation activity which is one of the meanings of recitation (*hifz*) is 'to preserve'.

Nevertheless, the element of rational thought in fardhu 'ain plays an important role in facing a situation which needs a way to practice the dogma and in the same era there is no clear verse about the application whether in al-Quran and Sunnah need to go through *ijtihād* in order to fulfil the obligation although in a condition that will not let to do it in the safe and flawless situation, such as praying outdoor, marrying in distance (via video), transaction using credit card, and many other.

The science of *fardhu kifayah* needs more element of rational thought than element of recitation. However, not all this sciences prioritize aspect of rational thought, especially on the things that are related with belief and matters which are *qat'ie* (matters with clear provision) like Allah is the omnipotent who created and guides a journey of whether disaster and outer space phenomenon, the Prophets are Allah's representatives who are clean from all sins, who have the responsibility to fast for 30 days during Ramadhan, who need to pray 5 times a day on particular times and illegitimacy for men who wear golden jewelries.

However, the science of *fardhu kifayah* which is recitation individually is one of the strengths and add plus point towards himself if being compared to those who don't recite it, moreover when exact intimation is needed without reference (Mohd Idris 1990:110).

Therefore, the dimension of recitation and rational thought are related one another, whether they play directly or indirectly in Islamic studies. *Fardhu 'ain and fardhu kifayah* sciences are often applied repeatedly in every situation and are understood clearly will be recited indirectly like the characteristic of Allah, the matters that cancel wudhu' and principles of prayer. The combination of both elements makes Islam can be applied on every period of time and situation without decreasing the basis matters, even it can be the main reference in giving solution towards all kind of problems in daily life.

## 6.0 Conclusion

Nowadays challenges, especially in Islamic studies if it seen from the dimension of recitation can be said more dominant in teaching and learning process if it is compared with the element of rational thought. Based on the ability of classifying the level of thinking, *Bloom Taxonomy process* synthesize and assess the science which has acquired is the highest level of thinking. Ignorance towards the element of rational thought since it is too emphasize recitation aspect makes human cannot utilize their wit ability normally. Investigation and exposure about the problem in Islamic studies does not aim to open the pies on chest, but aim to give a perspective that crisis form which is needed to be prioritized in the system of Islamic studies itself. However when we all agree that this crisis is not caused by the essence of Islamic dogmas, but by the methodology and way of thinking of Muslim people which are frozen and passive. Through the explanation of the concept of recitation and rational thought based on Western and Islam perspective, we can understand and can continuously produce the proper output in the process of teaching and learning with applying both dimensions in Islamic studies accurately.

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