

# AL-QUR'AN AS AN "OPEN BOOK" IN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (THE SIGNIFICANT MEANING OF PEDAGOGICAL VALUES AND PRODUCTIVE READING)

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**Abstract:** Especially after the first age of Hijra, Muslims have been merely concerning with the issues of Qur'anic spelling, the rules of reciting the Qur'an correctly, and has just been giving attention to memorising Qur'anic verses. They paid a little attention to the dialogical aspect of the Qur'an so that they left behind. Qur'anic revelation that has proceeded gradually was one of apparent evidence for the meaning of dialogical aspect characterising "progressive revelation" of the Holy Book. Such revelation mode has reflected the existence of creative interaction among the Will of God, the empirical reality of life, and the demand of receiver society. The other evidence of its' dialogical aspect was the first revelation to the Prophet containing instruction of reading. Based on this spirit, naturally, the Qur'an has been named with "the Book of education". Like a living text, the Qur'an has positioned the receiver community of revelation as a partner of communication to open dialogue and communication occurring as in education rooms. In this matter, the relevance of educational Qur'anic interpretation can be elaborated. Educational perspective is a part of intellectual efforts to find out and to formulate prescriptions of education in the Qur'an, and a part of endeavours to position it as a source of knowledge and civilisation without neglecting the meaning of empirical realm and human intellectual capability as prime sources of science and civilisation. In educational perspective, the miracle of the Qur'an is more depicted from its' transformative influences to mentality and mindset of Muslims, so at the first period of Islamic history in the past time, they have succeeded gaining the preeminent cultural achievements.

**Keywords:** Dialogical aspects of the Qur'an, pedagogical values, educational perspective, productive reading

## INTRODUCTION

Al-Qur'an is the source of values that always inspires and guides the Muslims into facing many problems of life. Based on this, it is reasonable if we state that dynamic interpretations of Al-Qur'an will solely achieve the future of them.<sup>1</sup> According to its name, "a perfect of the reading book", the holy book has placed a central position. It is showed through great attention of the Muslims from the past time until now in reading, studying, and practising. In a short sentence, there is no reading book from the time of humankind knowing literacy more than five thousand ago that has been competing with Al-Qur'an.<sup>2</sup> Although like this, it does not mean that for a long time, the attitude of Muslims to the holy book is without any problem needed to being criticised. According to Fazlur Rahman, at least there are two crucial problems being faced by the Muslims nowadays, especially in the intellectual elites, i.e. : (1) they less experience the relevance of al-Qur'an with current issues so they can not present its messages to respond actual needs, and (2) they feel worried if presenting al-Qur'an with new interpretation, then this will deviate from the established opinion of the past religious scholars whose accepted.<sup>3</sup> Factually, to comprehend and to interpret al-Qur'an which resemble exactly with the past religious scholars are not entirely right. Surely, al-Qur'an has made with each generation and commanding them to study and to think about it.<sup>4</sup> In a definite statement, it is needed an interactive pattern with al-Qur'an that contains a mutual-relation between human and al-Qur'an. Each of them does a deed and receives a response from each other.<sup>5</sup>

Not only Rahman, but Syaikh Muhammad al-Ghazali also uttered the same critics. Explicitly, he said, "The Muslims especially after the first age of hijra, have heavily concerned to how to recite al-Qur'an and how to memorise verses of al-Qur'an". They have not paid attention to its dialogical aspect so causing them left behind.<sup>6</sup> The revelation of al-Qur'an gradually was firm evidence for its a

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<sup>1</sup> M. Dawam Rahardjo, *Ensiklopedi al-Qur'an: Tafsir al-Qur'an Berdasarkan Konsep-konsep Kunci* (Jakarta: Paramadina, printed II, 2002), 2.

<sup>2</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan al-Qur'an: Tafsir Maudhu'i atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Bandung: Mizan, printed IX, 1999), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Tema Pokok al-Qur'an*, terj. Anas Mahyuddin (Bandung: Pustaka, printed II, 1996), xi.

<sup>4</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan al-Qur'an: Fungsi dan Peran Wahyu dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat* (Bandung: Mizan, printed XVI, 1997), 93.

<sup>5</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir: Syarat, Ketentuan, dan Aturan yang Patut Anda Ketahui dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat al-Qur'an* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2013), 21.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Berdialog dengan al-Qur'an*, trans. Masykur Hakim (Bandung: Mizan, 1997), p. 15. See also, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *al-Tajdid wa al-Tahrîm wa al-Ta'wîl* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Thaqafi, 2014), 127.

dialogical aspect that has characterised “a progressive vision” of the Holy Book. Such pattern of revelation has reflected that there was a creative interaction between the Will of God, empirical reality of life and the need of receiver communities.<sup>7</sup> In this context, its dialogical aspect was shown by the acquisition of the al-Qur’an interpreters to the meaning of revelation background in order to interpret messages of the Holy Book accurately. There are several functions of the revelation background that often stated by the experts in Qur’anic studies, i.e.: (1) to explain an importance behind implementing Islamic laws, (2) to specify the validity of Islamic laws that uttered through general statement, (3) to explore hidden meanings of the al-Qur’an, and (4) to make more clear what or who is intended by the revealed verses.<sup>8</sup> However, given the background of revelation was still understood as specific cases that were the background for verses revelation or as questions being asked to the Prophet so being revealed Qur’anic verses. It means not all of them have the background of revelation; some of the contemporary Muslim thinkers have criticised such opinion.<sup>9</sup> Such understanding on the background of revelation was considered as a partial or an imperfect view because it is still in bits and pieces or an atomic perspective in viewing mutual relations between the revelation of al-Qur’an and it is socio-cultural surrounding. The dialogical aspect of the Holy Book has not been appreciated comprehensively because of its response to empirical realities, and social demands perceived as incidental.

Moreover, requirements of the revelation background must base on the transmitted reports not base on reasoning implies a meaning that the accepted context area was just limited to cases or questions when the transmitted authority supported the revelation of Qur’anic verses. Therefore, the historical analysis and contextualising of verses with the fullness of reasoning activities are not needed anymore, because of being prejudiced those will open an opportunity for human subjectivity in interpreting al-Qur’an widely. However, the historical analysis and contextualising make a dialogical aspect of al-Qur’an will be dynamic, because of the response of al-Qur’an could be understood and instilled in the broader spectrum of context and always accompanying the socio-cultural dynamics of human life.

Another evidence of a dialogical aspect of al-Qur’an is the first revelation received by the Prophet that contains instruction for reading. With such

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<sup>7</sup> Farid Esack, *Qur’an, Liberation, and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1997), 54.

<sup>8</sup> Manna al-Qaththan, *Mabâhith fi ‘Ulûm al-Qur’ân* (N.P.: N.P., NY.), 79-81

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, .77-78.

instruction, al-Qur'an actually has been inviting us to (1) be aware and be responsive to realm of society, culture, and nature, (2) to use all of self-potential to reflect and to learn the entire of reality, and (3) to strengthen the ethos of learning and seeking knowledge for promoting life. Based on the spirit of the first revelation, appropriately Syaikh Abdul Halim Mahmud named al-Qur'an as "an education book". Giving affirmation such opinion, In this context, Quraish Shihab stated clearly that if we refer to Qur'anic verses, we will find it speaks directly or indirectly on almost all aspects of education.

Based on the spirit of the first revelation, reasonably Shaykh Abdul Halim Mahmud called the Qur'an with the "book of education". To affirm this case, Quraish Shihab firmly said that if we refer to the verses of the Qur'an, then we could find it speaks directly or indirectly concerns almost all elements of education. It means that the Qur'an is the actualisation of *uslûb* of God in directing, encouraging, and guiding humankind to tread the right path for achieving the happiness of life in the world and the hereafter. The humankind is like "the students" of God and a central theme in the Qur'an. It can be observed from the first revelation, Qs. Al-' Alaq: 1-5, where God both introduces himself as Rabb (the root of word *tarbiyah*) and calls human twice. First, the man referred to in the context of dealing with God as a being that was created. Second, the man referred to in the context of dealing with God, as creatures who receive lessons (knowledge) through the intercession of the pen. Most books of tafsir explained that he calls humans specifically in the paragraph above imply the meaning of human glory and *fitrah* (natural potentials). In other words, as the book of education, al-Quran since the beginning has been affirmed the glory of the human dignity and recognising potential (*fitrah*), especially the potential of readiness to be educated, knowledgeable, and sentient primordial divinity.

## FIND AND DISCUSSION

### *The Pedagogical Values in Quran's Revelation Process*

Malik bin Nabi, one of the famous Muslim Intellectuals from Algeria, said that the revelation of the Qur'an gradually might be the only possible educative method in a period characterised by the birth of the Islamic religion and the rise of a new civilisation. Malik Ben Nabi, a Muslim scholar from Algeria, suggested that the revelation of the Qur'an are gradually perhaps is the only educational methods are possible in an era marked by the birth of a religion and the emergence of the dawn of civilisation. All this time, the scholars in Qur'anic studies usually classify the period of Qur'anic revelation into two: Meccan and Madani. That is not merely graduation, but such two periods of revelation also

had different characteristics in the style and content of the message in line with actual demands.<sup>10</sup> That is the existence of al-Qur'an as an open book because although it consists of many verses and surahs, every one of them has responded to varied actual situations and problems. Moreover, a gradual revelation has been proven capable to give stronger psychological impacts than revelation all at once,<sup>11</sup> because although it is composed of the many verses, each verse and the letter turns out to respond to the various situations and problems. More than that, the revelation, gradually proved capable of inflicting a much stronger psychological impact compared to if the revelation took place at once.<sup>12</sup>

As stated by Quraish Shihab, the Arabic society in revelation period named as an unskillful society in reading and writing. Perhaps, at that time, there are only teens of skillful people in reading and writing. Indeed, for some people, the ability of reading and writing was considered a taboo if the public has known it because of the main parameters in cleverness were at the ability to memorise.<sup>13</sup> Besides that, the means of writing available time is also minimal. No wonder, if the effort of gathering together the Qur'an is still using the means of writing simple, like a stone slab, searching for dates, animal skin that is already tanned, and bones. In such a context, the revelation of the Qur'an gradually has great significance for the effectiveness of the message it conveys, because the recipient community will certainly find it helpful easily to memorise, to understand, and to practice, considering the main tool they rely on is merely memorising by rote. Such memorising indeed requires the existence of a process of gradual entry of a message in order to be digested properly and can last a long time. The revelation process in such context was useful to strengthen the impression of the received message, so it feels more meaningful and functional for the recipient. It is where one of the pedagogical values of the gradual revelation of the Qur'an that could be explained at the context of the time, while a value of its pedagogic for the present context needs to view from its dynamic responses toward issues and demands of the actual community. Thus, there are two-steps (double movement) that must be done by someone in order to be able for digging out the message of the Qur'an, those are (1) he must understand the meaning of a statement (Qur'anic verse) by examining the situation or problem where the Qur'anic

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<sup>10</sup> M. Abid al-Jabiri, *Madkhal ila al-Qur'an al-Karim: Fi al-Ta'rif bi al-Qur'an*, vol I (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 2007), 235.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 234.

<sup>12</sup> Ben Nabi, *Fenomena al-Qur'an*, 91.

<sup>13</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Mukjizat al-Qur'an Ditinjau dari Aspek Kebahasaan, Isyarat Ilmiah, dan Pemberitaan Ghaib* (Bandung: Mizan, 2007), 74-75.

statement became an answer, and (2) generalization of specific answers and revealing them as general statements that have the goals of social and public morality.<sup>14</sup>

In the literature of Qur'anic studies, it was usually explained some wisdom behind the gradual revelation of the Qur'an, namely: firstly, to strengthen the heart of the Prophet in running duties of Islamic preaching and to make him feel easy in permeating the meanings of the Quranic verses. Secondly, it provides convenience to the Companions in listening, studying, understanding, and memorised the Qur'an. Thirdly, that the verses of the Qur'an which are relevant to the situation, the conditions, and the development of the community. Fourthly, in order to the verses of the Qur'an that were revealed being accepted and done well by the Companions.<sup>15</sup> Based on such deeper insights, it appears that values to elaborate are merely concerning the context of the revelation time, not yet going to the present context. Placed within the framework of the rationality of religious law that built on (1) basic principle (universal) of Islamic law, (2) the provisions of the particular law, and (3) the purpose of the law and the context of the revelation,<sup>16</sup> the relevance of the gradual Quranic revelation actually indicates a dynamic response toward the actual reality of life that is always changing and evolving, even the God as though directly involved to answer specific questions in the process of social times of the Prophet. It means the Qur'an has proved itself as an "open book" because of giving a broad space of possibility to interpret continuously. In this context, the explanation from the Prophet toward the meaning of the Quranic verses was not "final" and "complete" intended as a limitation except for a little portion of the Qur'an,<sup>17</sup> so every generation remains to have an opportunity to explore the appropriate meaning of them in line with their abilities and the environmental demands. That is, another value of the pedagogical meaning that can be explained from the gradual revelation of the Qur'an to the current context and the universality of its teachings that are cross centuries.

Although it is perceived as the word of God, the Qur'an's language looks impressive through its unique style that is psychologically very human, so being

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<sup>14</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam dan Modernitas: Tentang Transformasi Intelektual*, trans. Ahsin Mohamad (Bandung : Pustaka, 2000), 7.

<sup>15</sup> A. Athaillah, *Sejarah al-Qur'an: Verifikasi tentang Otentisitas al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), 153-168.

<sup>16</sup> M. Abid al-Jabiri, *al-Dimuqrathiyyah wa Huqûq al-Insân* (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 1994), 174.

<sup>17</sup>Thaha Jabir al-Ulwani, *Lâ Ikrâha fî al-Dîn: Isyâliyyat al-Riddah wa al-Murtaddîn min Shadr al-Islâm Hattâ al-Yawm*, (Kairo: Maktabah al-Syuruq al-Dauliyyah, 2003),.19-20.

able to excite the imagination of intellectual and moral feelings of the readers. For those who delve in it wholeheartedly, the verses of the Qur'an are like talking, and dialogue with its readers, not merely to the Prophet Muhammad; its moral message represents voices of the inner human, not messages that come from the outside. According to the statement of Abu Zayd, al-Qur'an uses some linguistical signs that are dynamic in delivering its specific messages;<sup>18</sup> the language of the Qur'an has the capability of carrying a Muslim to the presence of the Lord and put him directly associated with the actual words. In short, the Qur'an in conveying messages uses the style of "emotive" language that looks so pay attention to the psychological aspects of the recipients. Like a "living text," the Qur'an in delivering its message places the recipients as partners – talk to open dialogue and communication as well as taking place in the educational rooms.

### ***The Differences between Jurisprudence and Education Perspective***

Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) perspective and education perspective indeed do not require to be disputed, but if we analyse them, however, both of them have some distinctions. *Fiqh*'s perspective pays much attention to the decision of the "law" (judgment), like a forbidden, rightful, obligation, and commendable, which is fixed and uniform, while the educational perspective pays much attention to the "advice" that puts forward wisdom, graduation, and diversity of individuals. Different answer or response of the Prophet, when asked for advice by his Companions about something needs to be conducted, such as: "Do not be angry," "Do fasting," and "Do praying on time," were forms of his wisdom in facing the diversity of the individuals. Goodness and truth as educational contents are not casually transmitted to others without paying attention to their conditions, cultural background, or level of development, intellectual property. So, he has ever told: "Bring others to talk following the level of intellectual development." Here, the Prophet invites us to consider cleverly the cultural and psychological realities of people or communities that we face so that educational messages are right on target.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat mentions three characteristics of *Fiqh*'s perspective [paradigm], namely (1) a single truth, (2) the principle of a single sect, and (3) the piety is assessed from fidelity on *Fiqh*.<sup>19</sup> The first characteristic means that there is only one truth, one answer and the others are wrong, so nothing option or

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<sup>18</sup> Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *al-Qur'an, Hermeneutik dan Kekuasaan*, trans. Dede Iswadi, et.al., (Bandung: RQiS, 2003), 95.

<sup>19</sup> Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *Dahulukan Akhlak Diatas Fiqih* (Bandung: Mizan, 2007), 42.

alternative. The second characteristic intends because the truth is only one; its consequence the correct sect is also just one; the third characteristic means the importance of making the Fiqh as a benchmark to assess someone's black-and-white or to take them into a group or not. Undenied, such characteristics are the result of the identification of the socio-religious community that comprehends and practices the Islamic teachings look rigid, even though be "ideological." Therefore, it is not redundant in this regard if Abid al-Jabiri concluded that extreme movements in the past had shown extremism at the level of belief, while the contemporary extreme movements run in the Sharia (Fiqh). One of the unfortunate excesses, extremism in Islamic law (Fiqh) turns out to be not merely stoked the conflict, gave birth to the tendency for considering "infidel" to others, but also encouraging violence and terror which threatens the safety of people life.

Fiqh's perspective sees human beings as subjects that are burdened with responsibilities, bound by the rules and were obedient (*mukallaf*). Related to this, Abu Zayd calls it with *the fiqh al-thâ'ah*,<sup>20</sup> because its principles built upon the willingness of self in receiving and submitting absolutely against the sacred-transcendental authority beyond all the profane-secular one. Meanwhile, educational perspectives are more viewing men as the responsible subjects that required the need to be critical and creative in carrying out their responsibilities. In the Qur'an, one of the terms that are close to such concept is the agent of God that means there is a Divine glorification for humankind with bestowing them various potentials, so making them be able to realize the duty in creating prosperity of the Earth and digging up all the natural resources for the benefit of living on behalf of God's Will.<sup>21</sup> To elaborate on the message of the Qur'an in the perspective of education, at least the verses associated with these themes need to be lifted, namely (1) view of the Qur'an concerning science, (2) the procedures for the acquisition of knowledge, (3) the creation of climate science, education (4) (5) individuals, community education, and (6) range of educational methods of the Qur'an.

All this time, usually viewpoints of the majority of Muslims are putting the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet as sources for the determination of the

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<sup>20</sup> Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *Dawâ'ir al-Khawf: Qirâ'ah fi Khithâb al-Mar'ah*, (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Tsaqafi al-'Arabi, 2000), 164-165.

<sup>21</sup> Abbas Mahjub, *Ushûl al-Fikr al-Tarbawiy fi al-Islâm*, (Damaskus: Dar Ibn Katsir, 1987), 57-58.



Islamic law.<sup>22</sup> Indeed it is not wrong to such viewpoints, but because of the strong influence of the Fiqh's perspective, frequently they become less sensitive to comprehend educational prescriptions of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, let alone to formulate such prescriptions be a perspective of the education. Based on Qs. al-Baqarah: 129, 151, Qs. Ali Imran: 164, and Qs. al-Jumu'ah: 2, one of the Prophet's mission, is related to the domain of science and education. It means that the function of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet as a source of knowledge and civilisation needs to be appreciated although that function indeed demands a great effort because of still in the new form that looks strange and not yet much intellectual heritage being inherited. In particular, the educational perspectives are part of the efforts to reveal and formulate educational messages of the Qur'an, and in general, it is part of the effort of putting the Qur'an as a source of knowledge and civilization, without intention refusing the significance of the empirical reality and human intellectual capabilities as sources of development of science and civilization.

On the one hand, the perspective of education needs to appreciate again the function of the Qur'an as a moral force that can encourage the initiation, creativity, and human intelligence to harness all available resources for the benefit of life and cultural progress. On the other hand, educational perspectives in digging the messages of the Qur'an is useful to critiquing the reality of educational activities, which still fall in historical romanticism with blind following and oppression of practical realism with adopting the Western system totally which is not always in tune with the guidance of Islam. No wonder if it still occurs in many educational practices that look mutually contradictory, i.e., the existence of a traditional-conservative system of "Islamic education" and a westernised system of Islamic education. It has given rise to a much negative impact on the intellectualism of Islam and leads to the malaise of the ummah,<sup>23</sup> such as the dichotomy of science, dualism of the education system, misorientation education.

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<sup>22</sup> Yusuf al-Qaradlawi, *al-Sunnah Mashdaran li al-Ma'rifah wa al-Hadlârah*, (Kairo: Dar al-Syuruq, 1997), 7.

<sup>23</sup> AbdulHamid AbuSulayman (ed.), *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, (USA: IIIT, 1989), 5-6.

## ***The Educational perspective and Its Significance in understanding the Quran***

Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali argued that to be able to understand the content of the Qur'an in a comprehensive manner, we need to leave a single perspective too dominated by a paradigm Fiqh.<sup>24</sup> Because of the dominance of this paradigm, it is not redundant if the Islamic civilisation, then called the "civilisation of fiqh or jurisprudence, given the strong influence of practical activities and intellectual activity. Unequivocally, Shaikh al-Ghazali revealed that the universality of Al-Quran not be noticed because the Quran just focused on certain forms of religious knowledge, i.e., the science of Fiqh only. While the verse is ordered to look, examine, and analyse yet serve as the foundation of the growing development of human sciences in history, as well as other matters that are closely related to the issue that has not been the basis Islamic culture is right. The implications of this trend are (1) shift of Islam toward merely as a religion, ritual, and *mu'amalah* (social interaction) (2) However, scientific reasoning, (3) loss of multidimensional viewpoints replaced by the black-and-white way of looking, and (4) the pattern of indoctrination education that castrated criticism.<sup>25</sup> Within such condition, a strong impression that the Qur'an as a book "sources of law" contains particular bias perspectives often dominance marginalising the other perspective in looking at the meaning of the Qur'an. Reasonably in the Qur'an then appreciated by intact as he approached and appreciated only from one side while ignoring the other side.

If it is in the study of the interpretation had been widely known pattern of various approaches, such as the pattern of Fiqh, theologies pattern, and the pattern of Sufism, then it should be quite possible the existence of an educational pattern. With this pattern, the Qur'an is approximated and elaborated from the perspective of efforts for respecting humankind, developing its potential, values cultivation, character building, and response to the needs of human life. Ontologically, the educational pattern is possible because all the contents of the Qur'an do indeed speak against humans or talking about human beings. It means that human is central to educational efforts became the subject of the Qur'an; that he is called in the Quran, critiqued, encouraged, invited, and serve as a dialogue partner of the Qur'an. Due to this, QS. 2: 185, for instance, confirms, "the month of Ramadan, in which lowered (the beginning of) the Qur'an as a guide for mankind and clear proofs for that guidance and the criterion ...". With

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<sup>24</sup> Al-Ghazali, *Berdialog*, 44-45.

<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Shahrur, *al-Kitâb wa al-Qur'ân: Qirâ'ah Mu'âshirah*, (Damaskus: al-Ahali li al-Thiba'ah, 1990), 726-728.

such functions, the Qur'an has placed human beings at the core of attention, like the learners, in the process of educational activities undertaken by the Prophet as the revelation recipient and the agent for prophetic mission.

From the perspective of education, the miracle of the Quran is more portrayed from the transformative effects on the mentality and mindset of Muslims. Gradually, the Holy Book can build up a positive mindset and mentality by abandoning the Ignorance culture, so be able to become a nation that managed glorious cultural achievements overdoing the other nations. Rightly if such transformative impact gained special attention to elaborate, as ever be written by Syaikh Rashid Ridla.<sup>26</sup> Even he conceived such impact as an inseparable part of the Quranic miracle in moving social change widely. Furthermore, he adds that the Qur'an is the book of education and teaching. Thus, the part of its purposes is to improve individuals and community, to deliver them toward the stage of maturity in thinking, to realise the brotherhood of humankind. In the short term, the presence of the Qur'an in greeting the readers is like the educational interaction in the classroom that always stimulates cognition, emotion, heart, physic, and all the other human potentials.<sup>27</sup> As evidence, no less than 1,200 questions in the Qur'an that are intended to stimulate the human mind and curiosity, to think about the God's creation and His principle in managing the world and this life, the Quranic messages, self-introspection, as well as problem-solving. The human is required to reassert forever and renew their existence that is always in "the process of becoming" toward the achievement of self-perfection. The exaltation of God to humankind, as mentioned in Qs. al-Tîn: 6 and Qs. al-Isrâ': 70, at least indicates the valuable meaning about (1) the recognition of human rights, (2) recognition of human's capabilities and corporate responsibility, and (3) recognition of human nobility in comparison with the other creatures. Based on this opinion, Quranic prescriptions loaded slowly with humanistic values that are proper to the development of education perspective. Educational perspectives can be formulated from many prescriptions of the Qur'an about human strengths and weaknesses, the human tasks, and effect/consequences of such tasks. Of course, the practical experience and rational-critical reasoning are needed to enrich the understanding of the normative prescription in order to avoid the textualist approach (*i'thâ' al-awwaliyyah li al-nash*).

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<sup>26</sup> M. Rasyid Ridla, *al-Wahyu al-Muhammadiyah*, printed VI, (Mesir: Nahdlah, 1956), 140-142.

<sup>27</sup> Jamal Badi & Musthapa Tajdin, *Islamic Creative Thinking: Berpikir Kreatif Berdasarkan Metode Qur'ani*, trans. Munir Mun'im, (Bandung: Mizania, 2007), 24-26, 41.

Based on that, educational perspectives is inseparable from our productive readings, i.e. a reading to uncover the meaning and significance (*maghzâ*) of Quranic verses, especially with regard to human, nature, and life in order to maximize its the response to actual problems for constructing its messages as a comprehensible (acceptable common sense or *ma'qûliyyah*) and applicable (can be applied or *ma'mûliyyah*). If the Qur'an likened as a form of God's meal, then it needs to be given priority here is how we can get as much as a possible nutrient from such a meal. The Quran's messages that can be digested very well will be useful for the intake process of potential growth and innate humanity of humankind. In this context, the perspective of education are concerned to be able to offer the meal that can be digested as the intake for all people who are willing to follow the educational guidance of the Qur'an. Besides the balance of the meal menu being presented, the other crucial thing is the condition the subjects who will have it. Regardless of the balance, the meal is presented even can trigger extreme religiosity of the subjects who enjoyed it; Similarly, regardless of the condition of the subjects, the meal being presented may cause him to choke. That is a parable that the Quran's messages as educational contents must be presented with a recipe formula that pays much attention to some aspects, like normative and historical/contextual aspects, gradual ones, humanising ones, and balance ones.<sup>28</sup>

Majid Irsan al-Kailani uttered some basic principles of educational guidance orientation of the Qur'an as follows: (1) introducing mankind with God as their creator and establishing patterns of relationships among both on the base of theocentric (*rabbâniyah*) and of obedience (*ubûdiyyah*), (2) developing individual behaviour in order to be in tune with the guidance of Islam, (3) training individuals to be able to meet the demands of the material necessities of life, (4) producing the Muslim generation who stand firmly on the Islamic creed and its impartial tenets, (5) directing the Muslims to bear in carrying Islamic treatise to the universe, and (6) cultivating belief in the unity of the humankind and their equality.<sup>29</sup> With such orientation, it is an incorrect assumption that tends to equate teaching Islamic religion with Islamic education. This assumption has been reducing the meaning of Islamic education and has been keeping them away from harmony with the Quran's educational guidance. There are at least eight principles that could be elaborated for that, namely (1) Islam is a

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<sup>28</sup> Asghar Ali Engineer, "Islam, Women, and Gender Justice," *Islamic Millennium Journal*, Vol. I, Number 1 (2001), 120.

<sup>29</sup> Majid Irsan al-Kailani, *Tathawwur Mafhûmi al-Nadhariyyah al-Tarbawiyah al-Islâmiyyah*, (Damaskus: Dar Ibn Katsir, 1987), 34-36.

religion of "natural" (fitri), religion is in harmony with nature and human nature, (2) Islam is a religion of rational, (3) Islam is the humanistic religion (for humanity) that placing the humankind as the core life and His caliph, (4) mankind tend to transcendental virtue (principle of universal goodness), (5) mankind is free to choose and act, (6) human doesn't live alone, but as a social creature, (7) Islam is a religion of progress that drives motion of the human consciousness, and (8) Islam is a worldly affirmative religion, worldly religion that teaches the necessity of work ethos, creativity, and commitment.<sup>30</sup> With those principles, empirical and rational Islamic mission try to be actualized as a capital for pushing forward the actual life of the humankind. The mission of rational Islam looks from so attractive of the Qur'an's attention towards human capability in exploring their rational potentials to discover the truth, whereas empirical mission of Islam seems from the objective consciousness developed by the Qur'an through presenting empirical evidence and response against the actual reality. Because of that, it is a very reasonable opinion that says, "the Qur'an gives a perspective in human history, that is not merely normative, but also always empirical. It presents not only logic but also empirical evidence".

Epistemologically, the empirical and rational mission of Islam has reflected well in "*al-nadhar*" concept that is the mental process of contemplation about something based on rational and sensory abilities of the human. The tendency of speculation without any rational observation over a contextual reality is less support for developing empirical and experimental sciences, as shown by the character of Natural sciences of the past Greece that is the pure philosophical-metaphysical studies based on the rational-deductive method. Due to the influence of appreciation of *al-nadhar* concept, the Muslim scientists in the Golden age have changed such character of science into a form of scientific study that was also experimental and inductive methods, so having been produced various subspecialties of socio-natural sciences, such empirical psychology, astronomy, chemistry, biology, and sociology.<sup>31</sup> The various branches of scientific knowledge have been incorporated into the primary educational material that time and have been encouraging the achievement of peak brightness in intellectual and scientific confidence in the Islamic world. That indicates that when the mission of the rational and empirical Islam has been able to appreciate

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<sup>30</sup> Hassan Hanafi, "Reconciliation and Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace" dalam *Islamic Millenium Journal*, Vol. I, Number 1 (2001), 16-18.

<sup>31</sup> Jalal Muhammad Musa, *Manhaj al-Bahth al-'Ilmi inda al-'Arab fi Majâl al-'Ulûm al-Thabiyyah wa al-Kawniyyah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Lubnani, 1972), 23.

well and to develop through educational and intellectual activities, it will become primary elements that sustain cultural progress of Muslim people.

## CONCLUSION

Dialogical aspects of the Qur'an are showed by its gradual revelation process that marks the progressive revelation of the Holy Text. Such gradual revelation reflects the existence of a creative interaction between the Divine Will, the empirical reality, and needs of the recipients. Besides that, such revelation process also was demonstrated by the first Quranic revelation for the Prophet where its dialogical aspect was contained in instruction for "reading". With the instruction of reading, the Qur'an endorsed and called man: firstly, to be sensitive and responsive to the reality of social, cultural, and natural. Secondly, to utilise all self-potential to ponder and learn the universe reality, and thirdly, to endorse learning ethos and scholarship in order to strengthen the ethos for life. Based on such spirit of revelation, the first time it was very reasonable if the Qur'an is named with the "book of education". Because the verses of the Qur'an either directly or indirectly to analyse almost all elements of education. Al-Qur'an pun in conveying messages using the style language "pathos" that looks so pay attention to the psychological aspects of the recipient. Like a "living text" or "open book" Qur'an, positioning the message recipients as partners – talk to open dialogue and communication as it is taking place in the educational booths. To elaborate on the message of the Qur'an in the perspective of education, at least the verses that deal with the theme of the following topics need to be prioritized, namely: the view of the Qur'an concerning science, the procedures for the acquisition of knowledge, creation of climate science, individual education, community education, and a variety of educational methods of the Qur'an. Educational perspectives is necessary to appreciate again the function of the Qur'an as a moral force that can encourage the initiation, creativity, and human intelligence to harness all available resources for the benefit of the life and the advancement of culture. Not only that, but the educational perspective is also necessary to dig preskripsi of the Qur'an in order to join critiquing the phenomenon of educational malpractice. This means that the perspective of education could not be released from his productive readings we did, namely a severe reading of the efforts to uncover the meaning and significance of the verses of the Qur'an pertains explicitly to humans, nature, and in order to maximize the life of the response against the actual problems of the pulse of life. If the Qur'an is perceived as a form of "meal" of God, then the thing to highlight is how we can get as many as possible "of nutrients" from that meal.

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