Developing a Teaching Module on Arabic Vocabulary Based on the Four Strands Theory for Pre-University Students in Malaysia: A Needs Analysis

Syakirah Mohd Razman
Department of Language and Literacy Education, Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Zawawi Ismail[*]
Department of Language and Literacy Education, Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Wail Muin Alhaj Said Ismail
Department of Educational Foundation and Humanities, Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract—**Vocabulary is very important in language learning. Studies on Arabic language vocabulary mastery in Malaysia show that lack of teaching materials on effective vocabulary learning contributed to problems in teaching vocabulary faced by teachers, including at pre-university level. Hence this study was carried out to identify the need for designing a module for teaching Arabic language vocabulary for pre-university students based on Nation's Four Strands theory. The survey approach was used with a questionnaire distributed for collecting data on the need to develop the module. The sample consisted of 63 pre-university Arabic language teachers, selected by purposive sampling. The research findings show that there was a need for designing the vocabulary teaching module for pre-university students based on the Four Strands theory comprising four elements, namely meaning focused input, meaning focused output, language focused learning and fluency development.**

Index Terms—**Arabic vocabulary, teaching module, vocabulary teaching activities, Four Strands Theory**

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a basic requirement needed in mastering a language (Arndt & Woore, 2018; Fan, 2003; Schmitt, 2008; Tuaymah, 1986). This is because without vocabulary, language learning cannot possibly proceed (Milton, 2009; Wilkin, 1972). Acquiring vocabulary is important for success in shaping language (Gu, 2003; Laufer & Nation, 1999; Read, 2000). Although vocabulary was sidelined in favour of grammar initially, until the early 1980s (Laufer, 1986; Meara, 1980); research focused on vocabulary acquisition accelerated in a dynamic way since then (AlQahtani, 2015; Daller et al., 2007). This was because of a rising awareness that language efficiency on the whole is more than just grammar efficiency (Schmitt & Meara, 1997). Teachers and educators now regard development of lexical knowledge as central to language learning (Read & Chapelle, 2001).

In the Arabic language context, a person needs to at first master vocabulary as the first step in learning a foreign language. With vocabulary, a person is able to think and then translate that thought into sentences that reflect the intended meaning (Al-Naqah, 1985). Vocabulary knowledge influences the quality of achievement in skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In other words, mastering of vocabulary and language have a very close and associated relationship (Samah, 2013). To perfect mastery of the four skills, vocabulary is the sub skill of language skill that must be emphasised, if the student wants to communicate through speech and writing (Mezah & Mohammad, 2016; Teng, 2014).

Nevertheless, many findings of research on Arabic language in Malaysia exposed the weaknesses in vocabulary as part of the glaring shortcomings faced by Arabic Language students (Pa, 2007). This weakness is found to continue from time to time, starting from primary school, secondary school until university level. Students were found to possess a vocabulary size way below that desired by the syllabus objectives (Baharudin & Ismail, 2014). Maskor (2020) found that only two percent of religious secondary school (SMKA) students mastered more than ¾ of vocabulary out of 1500 high frequency words tested. Studies on pre-university level have found that students did not have the Arabic language vocabulary size necessary for university level success (Baharudin & Ismail, 2014). Rejab (2016) found that inability to

---

[*] Corresponding Author

master Arabic language vocabulary hindered pre-university students from learning *Insya'*. Following from this situation, studies on vocabulary size at university level (Razak & Samah, 2018) and university college (Zaini, 2015) have shown that students face serious problems in mastering important vocabulary in learning Arabic language. These findings align with those in studies carried out overseas that reported how vocabulary acquisition is the biggest challenge faced by second language learners (Arndt & Woore, 2018; Nykos & Fan, 2007; Wallace, 2007), especially in the context of limited language exposure. Hence, problems arising especially among students at all levels of learning are related to lack of vocabulary appropriate for their learning level.

Teaching of vocabulary in Malaysia occurs in an implicit way (Baharudin & Ismail, 2014). In some other countries too, students are expected to learn vocabulary by themselves without much guidance (Oxford & Scarcella, 1994) or it is often taught without systematic instruction (Norris & Ortega 2000). The vocabulary aspect is touched upon indirectly in teaching of language skill or the subject of other language knowledge such as grammar, morphology and so forth. Teaching in implicit way is related with weakness among students in Arabic language acquisition overall (Samah, 2012). Hence, teaching needs to have a clear target and objective among teachers and students and have an approach of teaching and evaluation suited to ensuring students can acquire vocabulary. In essence, the vocabulary aspect is marginalised in the teaching process and this disturbs the Arabic language acquisition process (Zaini, 2015).

The teacher is a very important element in language teaching. In language teaching, the teacher plays a unique role in developing student vocabulary knowledge and language skill. Nevertheless, Zheng (2012) reported that teachers of foreign language face difficulties in teaching vocabulary to students in terms of pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary in the varying context of sentences. Teachers face a dilemma in teaching vocabulary because they do not know what to teach (Wallace, 2007). Language teachers often are unsure about the best way to integrate vocabulary learning in their teaching (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008; Read, 2004; Schmitt, 2008). This occurs mainly because the text book and syllabus are often unclear in giving explanations and guidelines regarding vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008). The same issue was emphasised by Al-Batal (2006) who stated that the vocabulary aspect was neglected in Arabic language classes; either less time was allocated to vocabulary building activities or there was lack of vocabulary based activities in text books with the main focus being Arabic language grammar. The teacher's own experience perhaps was not enough to provide guidance in vocabulary development without outside help (McCrostie, 2007; Schmitt, 2008). Here it needs the role and expertise of the researcher, to give effective guidance related to activities and approach to effective teaching and learning.

In the Malaysian context, aspect of Arabic language vocabulary teaching was found to be less emphasised compared with other languages such as English. Most of the studies on Arabic language vocabulary in Malaysia focused on vocabulary learning strategies (Baharudin & Ismail, 2014; Isa et al., 2014; Ismail et al., 2016), and the size aspect in vocabulary learning (Baharudin & Ismail, 2014; Zaini & Rahman, 2017), relationship between strategy and vocabulary size (Baharudin & Lubis, 2015; Ishak, 2017) and vocabulary knowledge (Maskor, 2020). But few studies focused on what teachers needed to teach Arabic language vocabulary especially at pre-university level. A few studies have investigated the approach to teaching Arabic language vocabulary through surveys (Samah, 2009) or practices by excellent teachers of Arabic language in teaching vocabulary (Aman & Baharudin, 2019; Hasmam et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, all studies on teaching Arabic vocabulary in Malaysia were in the context of primary and secondary schools only. The reality is that teachers of pre-university Arabic language need a guide on aspects of vocabulary such as selection of theory or suitable approach for implementing vocabulary teaching. Lack of teaching aids in the form of a module for teaching Arabic language vocabulary also is a problem in Arabic language teaching. Hence, to achieve the goal for teacher and student to master Arabic language vocabulary, we suggest that a needs analysis is required for determining the needs for developing a teaching module on Arabic language vocabulary for pre-university level.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary acquired by primary and secondary students will be important and will be the key provision for what they need to continue at higher education level. University students need to have vocabulary knowledge of sufficient size and depth of vocabulary. These two aspects of size (quantity) and depth (quality) in vocabulary knowledge are regarded as very important factors in language mastery (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2008; Vermeer, 2001).

Students who wish to further their studies in universities have needs to master a certain level to achieve *general language proficiency*. The minimum proficiency level as determined by most linguistics scholars is 2000 to 3000 high frequency words (Nation & Waring, 1997; Schmitt, 2000), but a larger vocabulary size is clearly better. In the context of Arabic vocabulary size, Tuaymah (1986) opined that the number of Arabic vocabulary terms needed to be taught in a teaching programme to non-native speaking students is something relative, depending on the programme, language skill, and situation of communication that needs training in the student. Mat Taib (2007) divided the vocabulary need into three levels, namely 1000 to 1500 words at initial or beginner level, 1500 to 2500 words at the second level and 2500 to 3500 words at the third level. Meanwhile, Al-Batal (2006) estimated that the total vocabulary needed to achieve high level efficiency requires 3000 to 3500 words. This means the pre-university student needs at least 2000 words before attending university. Nevertheless, this total is only a guide and students should acquire as many words as possible especially at the early stage of language learning, without limiting themselves to mastering only a fixed number of words (Meara, 2001; Nation, 2001).

Besides requiring a large number of lexical items, students also must know the details of a word so that they can use it well (Meara, 1996; Read, 1993, 2000). The ability to understand the meaning of a word at deeper level including its pronunciation, spelling, meaning, frequency, sound, syntax and collocation according to context (Qian, 2002) is regarded as depth of vocabulary. This means that knowledge of a lexical unit involves several aspects such as: pronunciation, spelling, register, morphological characteristics, syntactic and semantic associations with other words (Nassaji, 2004), including the meaning of collocations and knowledge of synonym, antonym as well as hyponym.

If evaluated from the pre-university syllabus level aspect, mastery of vocabulary has been stated clearly in learning outcomes to be achieved for skills such as reading texts for understanding, writing essays and speaking for semester 1 and semester 2. The learning outcomes are for the students to recognise words and phrases in these studies (Malaysian Examinations Council, 2012). This reflects the desired ideal of the Arabic language curriculum related to vocabulary aspect as delineated in the official document. Nevertheless, the pre-university Arabic language syllabus does not detail the vocabulary that needs to be taught for each theme and does not guide nor emphasise as needed on vocabulary as it deserves as with other language components especially grammar.

Baharudin and Ismail (2014) found that pre-university students who take Arabic language subject do not possess a sufficient vocabulary to function effectively. Average Arabic vocabulary size among pre-university students was 717 words out of the 4000 words tested, representing only 17.9 percent of the number of words tested. This very limited size can prevent learning, as shown by many previous studies on Arabic language in Malaysia (Pa, 2009; Samah, 2013).

Following from the knowledge of vocabulary that is low or moderate among students, this affects the student achievement which is not satisfactory in examinations. This can be seen in the Report on Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia/STPM (Malaysian Higher School Certificate) Arabic Language paper for the three years 2016, 2017 and 2018 as reported by Malaysian Examinations Council. In the exam report for each semester for the three consecutive years, the candidate performance was weak in all sections. One of the causes for this, as reported, was weakness in vocabulary such that candidates could not understand the questions and texts. Candidates also were found not mastering the vocabulary in the themes of reading comprehension and essay writing (Malaysian Examinations Council, 2016, 2017, 2018). The report also showed that the highest percentage for each semester was the percentage failing (grade F) that exceeded 30%. Meanwhile, the candidates who passed totally were about only 50% or 40%.

Hence it can be concluded that weaknesses in Arabic language vocabulary at pre-university level require a form of intervention that can help students achieve the desired Arabic vocabulary knowledge. Hence there is a need for pre-university teachers to effect improvements in teaching approaches aimed at enhancing mastery of Arabic language vocabulary knowledge among students. We suggest that a teaching approach through developing a module using a unified theory can be used as a guide to benefit pre-university teachers and students.

III. FOUR STRANDS FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

We have chosen the *Four Strands* theory for building the teaching module on Arabic language vocabulary for pre-university students. This theory forwarded by Nation (2001, 2007) is an approach employing principles that are balanced for teaching and learning vocabulary and is supported by second language acquisition theories. This theory can be applied effectively in various second language and foreign language learning situations. Nation's approach is known as *Four strands of teaching vocabulary*. He criticised the majority of vocabulary teaching approaches that paid attention only to introducing meaning of new words without considering other lexical aspects or various necessary knowledge that must be mastered together with vocabulary.

Four strands for teaching vocabulary emphasise a way of teaching vocabulary that is balanced, consisting of four elements, namely (a) element of meaning focused input, (b) element of meaning focused output, (c) element of language focused learning, as well as (d) element of fluency development in language. These four strands build a framework for ensuring teaching of vocabulary is carried out in a balanced and detailed way (Coxhead, 2010). Nation (2001) asserted that teaching and learning vocabulary through aligning the four elements can integrate vocabulary learning in a planned manner by *intentional learning* and learning of vocabulary by indirect or *incidental learning*.

All four elements are regarded as strands because they are seen as a set of learning situations that are continuous and mutually complement each element, transcending overall language teaching (Nation, 2007). Nation (2007) justified that the more time allocated to do something, the more a person achieves in that field. This is supported by Schmitt (2010) who emphasised that the more students are engaged with a new word, the more they will learn it better. Each language skill has its own unique difference, and must be allocated the balanced time and attention by teachers in vocabulary teaching and learning (Coxhead, 2010; Nation, 2007). The four strands are explained in Table 1:

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF FOUR STRANDS IN TEACHING VOCABULARY (NATION, 2001)

Element		Pre-requisites	Examples of activities
Meaning focused input	(1)	Students are familiar with a large part of the vocabulary heard or read.	Reading various types of reading materials, graded reading materials (graded by difficulty level), hearing stories/news clips
	(2)	Students are interested in the input and desire to understand it.	
	(3)	Only a small part of the vocabulary is unknown to the student, around 2% to 5% of the text.	
	(4)	The student can guess the unknown vocabulary through contextual cues and background knowledge.	
	(5)	Large quantities of input are given	
Meaning focused output	(1)	Students must write and speak about the vocabulary they already know.	Communication activities, guided writing, activities that integrate some language skills.
	(2)	Main objective of student is to deliver their message to others.	
	(3)	Only a small minority of vocabulary they need to use is unfamiliar to them (2% − 5%).	
	(4)	Students can use communication strategies, dictionary to overcome the lack of knowledge of productive vocabulary knowledge.	
	(5)	There are many opportunities for speaking and writing.	
Language focused learning	(1)	Student pays attention to vocabulary directly.	Teaching vocabulary explicitly, using vocabulary cards, training in vocabulary learning strategies.
	(2)	Students process vocabulary in depth.	
	(3)	Teaching and facilitation allocate enough time for giving attention and repetition of the same characteristics.	
	(4)	The vocabulary learned in this element is also learned in the other three elements.	
Development of language fluency	(1)	All being heard, read, spoken or written is known to the student; there is no vocabulary unknown to the student.	Reading or listening to easy materials repeatedly, training in speaking many times, and doing timed writing.
	(2)	Student focus in this activity is to receive and deliver meaning.	
	(3)	Some pressure or encouragement to carry out activities faster than usual.	
	(4)	A lot of input and output delivered.	

The four elements forwarded by Nation are:

i)   Element of meaning focused input

This element involves teaching and learning vocabulary through reading and listening activities (receptive skill) in a meaningful context. Objective of this element is to make the student acquire vocabulary knowledge in the second language by understanding input through listening and reading. Students must be able to understand 95% of the words in any input they receive and learning occurs in the 5% that is new to them. If the students do not understand 95% of the material they encounter, it will be difficult for them to predict or guess the meaning of the balance 5% of vocabulary from the context. If the student can understand only 75% of words in a particular text, one out of every four words on the page is unknown, which is a quantity beyond control from the student perspective. An example of activity in this element is to read a wide range of reading materials and to take part as a listener in a conversation, story or audio text.

ii)   Element of meaning focused output

This element is similar to the input element that is focused on meaning but is related to productive skill, namely speaking and writing. Teaching and learning of vocabulary in this element is through activity such as writing or speaking for disseminating a message to another. As with input, in the element output, students only use a small part of their vocabulary that they do not know in their speaking and writing, while 95% of the language is what they already know. Students need many opportunities for speaking and writing. Examples of activities under this element include speaking on a topic learned, explaining how to do something, and taking part in a conversation.

iii)   Element of language focused learning

The third strand is teaching and learning focused on language characteristics such as pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary aspects, grammar and other language aspects. It involves learning of language characteristics planned directly, as opposed to learning vocabulary indirectly that occurs in the input and output strands. Objective of this element is for the student to pay attention to characteristics of vocabulary, and students must process these characteristics deeply (Nation, 2007). This element aligns with the approach by Zimmerman (2009) who introduced two key concepts in vocabulary teaching namely *word consciousness* and *layers of word knowledge*. Knowing a certain word means knowing a lot of its characteristics, including its meaning, collocations, grammatical characteristics, derivatives and suitability of use (Zimmerman, 2009). Examples of activities in this element encompass teaching aspects of vocabulary such as pronunciation, spelling, meaning, and collocation directly. Nation (2001, 2007) also suggested in this element for teachers to train students in vocabulary learning strategies.

iv)   Element of fluency development

The last strand is related to training students to practise the language they have already known so that they become more skilled in using it by repetition. The aim is for students to deliver messages, in limited time to hasten input and output processing. Students must understand 99-100% of input and must be given a large amount of input and opportunities to use the words they already know. An example of an activity in this element includes rapid reading, activity 4/3/2 (re-telling a topic using time that is reduced for each re-telling), and timed writing.

Nation (2013) consistently in various studies emphasised that a planned approach is needed for developing vocabulary in students for better effectiveness as opposed to handling it in *ad hoc* manner or only when teachers have a suitable opportunity to teach it. The idea of Four Strands had been the basis for the design of many specific vocabulary teaching components (Noroozi & Siyyari, 2019; Quentin, 2015; Tsubaki, 2018). Rationale for selecting this theory in developing the vocabulary teaching module is because it gives balanced emphasis on developing vocabulary in the form of receptive and productive (element of meaning focused input and output, fluency development), besides adequate emphasis on characteristics of vocabulary itself (element of language focused learning). The theory also holds that the main role of the student is to practise using the language, especially through two elements of meaning focused output and element of fluency development.

Needs analysis ensures that a course, programme or module and the like will contain the relevant matters and is useful for learning (Nation, 2010). The term needs analysis generally refers to the activities involved in data collection that becomes the basis for developing a curriculum to fulfil the needs of a specific student group. A good needs analysis will forward the exact questions and will seek answers effectively. This study focuses on the initial process of identifying the need for teaching and learning Arabic language vocabulary at pre-university level from the teacher perspective. The findings are expected to help the researchers design and develop a module for teaching Arabic language vocabulary suited to pre-university students.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the research objective, the following are the research questions to be answered by the study:
1. What is the level of Arabic Language vocabulary among pre-university students in Malaysia from the teacher perspective?
2. Is there a material or resource for direct teaching of Arabic language vocabulary to students in Malaysian schools?
3. Is there a need for developing an Arabic language vocabulary teaching module for Malaysian pre-university students based on elements and activities in the Four Strands theory?

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a survey research using a questionnaire to collect data on the need to develop a module for Arabic language vocabulary teaching from the teacher perspective based on the Four Strands theory at pre-university level.

A. Research Sample

This needs analysis study involved teachers of pre-university Arabic language in schools offering Arabic language subject at STPM (Malaysian Higher School Certificate) level. The schools involved are: Religious Secondary School (SMKA), Fully Residential School (SBP), Form Six College (Kolej Tingkatan Enam), State Government-Owned Religious Schools (SMAN) and Government-Aided Religious School (SABK) from all over Malaysia. To achieve the research objectives, respondents were selected through purposive sampling to select teachers who have taught STPM Arabic language for at least five years. The rationale for selecting this sample was that teachers who have taught for five years are experienced in teaching and have mastered the syllabus. We successfully obtained complete data from 63 respondents out of 70 STPM Arabic language teachers identified in this study.

B. Research Instrument

The survey instrument contained 4 parts, namely: (a) demographics, (b) mastery level of Arabic language vocabulary among pre-university students, (c) existence of materials or resources directly related to Arabic language vocabulary teaching in school for pre-university students, (d) need for developing Arabic language vocabulary teaching module for pre-university students based on elements and activities in the Four Strands theory. All elements of this theory are explained in the survey form. As for the answer choices, the researchers used two choice selection and multiple choice for respondents to select their agreement with the items given.

The research instrument had undergone the content validation process by five experts in the field of study as well as two language experts. Instrument reliability was obtained by carrying out pilot study on 30 respondents not involved in the actual study. The Cronbach alpha value obtained for the instrument was .937, signifying its reliability as an instrument for the research. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistical analysis by SPSS; research question 1 was analysed through frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Research question 2 used frequency and percentage, while research question 3 involved data analysis using mean score and standard deviation.

VI. RESEARCH FINDING

Findings of the study are aimed at answering several questions related to developing a vocabulary teaching module based on the Four Strands theory (Nation, 2001). Based on descriptive analysis of the questionnaire responses, the findings obtained are explained.

Research Question 1: What is the level of Arabic vocabulary among pre-university students from the Arabic language teacher perspective? Analysis of the level of Arabic vocabulary among pre-university students from the language teacher perspective is given in in Table 2.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY, PERCENTAGE AND MEAN LEVEL OF ARABIC LANGUAGE VOCABULARY AMONG PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Item	Frequency and Percentage					**Mean**	Std. Deviation
	VL	L	M	H	VH		
Level of Arabic Language vocabulary among pre-university students	5 (7.9)	24 (38.1)	34 (54.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	**2.46**	0.643

1-Very Low (VL), 2-Low (L), 3-Moderate (M), 4-High (H), 5-Very High (VH)

Based on Table 2, the highest percentage of respondents (54 percent or 34 respondents) stated that the level of Arabic language vocabulary among pre-university students was moderate, while some 38.1 percent (24 respondents) reported the vocabulary of their students was at low level and 7.9 percent or 5 respondents stated that the vocabulary of pre-university students was at very low level. This means that 46 percent of teachers stated that the vocabulary level of pre-university students was at low or very low level. No teacher opined that the vocabulary level of their students was at high or very high level. The mean for item vocabulary level was 2.46, with standard deviation of 0.643.

Research question 2: Existence of materials or resources for direct teaching of Arabic vocabulary in school for pre-university students. Analysis of teacher perspective regarding existence of material or resource directed at teaching Arabic vocabulary in schools for pre-university students is displayed in Table 3.

TABLE 3
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF TEACHER VIEWS ON EXISTENCE OF MATERIALS OR RESOURCES DIRECTLY INFLUENCING ARABIC LANGUAGE VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT AMONG PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS

Item	Agreement	Frequency (n = 63)	Percentage (%)
Existence of materials or resources directly influencing teaching of Arabic Language vocabulary for pre-university students in schools	Yes	12	19.0%
	No	51	81.0%

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents or 81 percent stated that there are no materials or resources directly related to teaching of Arabic language vocabulary in schools for pre-university students. Only 19 percent of respondents opined that such resources or materials exist.

Research question 3: Need for developing a teaching module on Arabic language vocabulary for pre-university students in Malaysia based on elements and activities in the Four Strands theory. Analysis of findings on teacher views regarding the elements required in the teaching module on Arabic language vocabulary development for pre-university students based on the Four Strands theory is shown in the following Table 4.

TABLE 4
MEAN SCORE, STANDARD DEVIATION AND MEAN INTERPRETATION FROM TEACHER PERSPECTIVE REGARDING ELEMENTS NEEDED IN THE ARABIC LANGUAGE VOCABULARY TEACHING MODULE FOR PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS BASED ON THE FOUR STRANDS THEORY

Item	Mean Score	Std. Deviation	Mean Interpretation
Element Meaning Focused Input	4.683	0.533	Very Necessary
Element Meaning Focused Output	4.746	0.474	Very Necessary
Element Language focused Learning	4.698	0.462	Very Necessary
Element Fluency Development	4.635	0.485	Very Necessary
Overall Agreement Score	4.690	0.488	Very Necessary

Table 4 shows the mean score, standard deviation and mean interpretation for the elements needed for the module to teach Arabic Language vocabulary to pre-university students. The overall mean was 4.690 and the standard deviation was 0.488 reflecting high mean interpretation. Based on findings, **all four elements s**how very high interpretation; for element Meaning Focused Input ($M = 4.683$, $SD = 0.533$), element Meaning Focused Output ($M = 4.746$, $SD = 0.474$), element Language focused Learning ($M = 4.698$, $SD = 0.462$) and fluency development ($M= 4.365$, $SD = 0.485$).

Analysis of activities in teaching of Arabic language vocabulary for the Four Strands theory as required by the teachers in the module on Arabic language vocabulary for pre-university students is displayed in Table 5.

TABLE 5
MEAN SCORES, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND MEAN INTERPRETATION FOR ACTIVITIES IN FOUR STRANDS THEORY IN TEACHING MODULE ON ARABIC
LANGUAGE VOCABULARY FOR PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA.

Item	Mean Score	SD	Mean Interpretation
Element of Meaning focused Input			
Reading a multi-themed text	4.508	0.564	Very necessary
Reading a graded reader text	4.413	0.612	Very necessary
Listening to a story	4.302	0.663	Very necessary
Listening to a conversation	4.444	0.616	Very necessary
Watching a video trailer/video clip	4.460	0.617	Very necessary
Overall Agreement Score	4.425	0.614	Very necessary
Element of Meaning focused Output			
Creating conversation based on a situation	4.556	0.561	Very necessary
Writing guided essays	4.667	0.508	Very necessary
Discussing the pros and cons of a certain topic	4.270	0.627	Very necessary
Giving guidance/instruction for doing something	4.540	0.563	Very necessary
Doing a book review	4.048	0.791	Very necessary
Writing letter/e-mail	4.413	0.612	Very necessary
Overall Agreement Score	4.415	0.610	Very necessary
Element of Language focused Learning			
Preparing word cards	4.016	0.793	Very necessary
Devising vocabulary learning strategies	4.492	0.504	Very necessary
Discussing understanding of text content	4.524	0.563	Very necessary
Giving feedback on student output	4.587	0.496	Very necessary
Teaching vocabulary aspects in explicit way	4.476	0.563	Very necessary
Overall Agreement Score	4.419	0.583	Very necessary
Element of Developing Fluency			
Training in repetitive fluent speaking	4.524	0.534	Very necessary
Training in speed reading	4.429	0.559	Very necessary
Training in timed writing	4.476	0.563	Very necessary
Training in listening to simple input	4.524	0.534	Very necessary
Combining several language skills into one theme	4.429	0.530	Very necessary
Overall Agreement Score	4.476	0.544	Very necessary
Overall Agreement Score for activities for Four Strands Elements	4.433	0.587	Very necessary

Table 5 displays the mean score, standard deviation and mean interpretation for activities required by teachers based on the elements in the Four Strands theory in the module for teaching Arabic language vocabulary to pre-university students. Overall mean score for activities in four elements was 4.433 with standard deviation of. 0.587, that was at very necessary level of mean interpretation. Based on the study findings all activities for elements in the Four Strands model are very necessary in teaching Arabic language vocabulary to pre-university students. The activities are activities for the element meaning focused input ($M = 4.425$, $SD = 0.614$), activity for the element meaning focused output ($M = 4.415$, $SD = 0.610$), activity for the element language focused learning ($M = 4.419$, $SD = 0.583$), and activity for element developing fluency ($M = 4.476$, $SD = 0.587$).

VII. DISCUSSION

This study was carried out to investigate the need for developing a module for teaching Arabic language vocabulary to pre-university students based on the Four Strands theory (Nation, 2001). This needs analysis was carried out to identify the need for developing a vocabulary module by investigating teachers' views regarding the need for such a module through three aspects, (a) level of Arabic language vocabulary among pre-university students according to the teacher perspective, (b) existence of material or resource directed at teaching Arabic language vocabulary in schools for pre-university students, and (c) elements of the Four Strands theory that need to be integrated into the module and activities for teaching vocabulary as desired by teachers.

Need for the module was shown by the findings of the study on the level of Arabic language vocabulary among pre-university students from the perspective of respondents who encompassed experienced Arabic language teachers of university students. More than half of the respondents opined that Arabic language vocabulary among students was at moderate level while almost half opined that the level was low or very low. This finding aligned with that of Baharudin and Ismail (2014) who found the mastery of Arabic language vocabulary by pre-university students was at low level. In general, scholars have found that mastery of Arabic language vocabulary among Malaysian students did not achieve the learning objective desired by language experts and the delineated syllabus requirements (Mat & Goh, 2010). This is attributed to neglect of vocabulary instruction in the class and designated text books (Al-Batal, 2006). Hence, improved teaching approaches are required for enhancing Arabic language vocabulary mastery among pre-university students, so that weakness in vocabulary is not prolonged when students enter university.

Findings of the study also show that the majority of teachers stated that lack of materials directly related to Arabic language vocabulary teaching in school for pre-university students was a stumbing block. This aligned with the view of Mezah and Mohammad (2016) who suggested that the vocabulary aspect be given serious attention because of student

weaknesses in writing, speaking and reading stemming from weakness in mastering Arabic language vocabulary. Besides that, students lacked participation in vocabulary enhancing activities and were not exposed to Arabic language reading materials suited to their level (Samah, 2009). Since they are teaching a subject labelled as difficult, teachers need to use appropriate Arabic language teaching materials and must avoid less effective conventional teaching approaches (Maskor et al, 2016). This situation reflects the need for a teaching module for enhancing student vocabulary acquisition.

This study also shows that the respondents opined that all elements of the Four Strands (Nation, 2001) are very much needed in building the module for Arabic vocabulary teaching. The elements are: a) meaning focused input, b) meaning focused output, (c) language focused learning and (d) fluency development. The input elements (elements of reading and listening skills) as well as element of meaning focused output (writing and speaking skills) are proven to play a big role in vocabulary acquisition as underlined in language learning theory such as the input and output hypothesis (Krashen, 1989; Swain, 1995). This finding is also aligned with that of Tuaymah (1989) who opined that vocabulary teaching is not limited to aspects such as pronunciation, meaning and derivation process, or stated as element of learning focused on language according to the Four Strands theory. In fact, students need to master the word and use it in its proper place, or what Nation's theory suggested as including the element of meaning focused output in teaching and learning.

Besides that, all activities in the element of Four Strands were agreed by the teachers as being very necessary in the vocabulary teaching and learning process. This finding aligns with that of Asyiah (2017) on teacher agreement that vocabulary teaching needs to be integrated in all language skills and not be marginalised in teaching. This finding also supports the study by Noorozi and Siyyari (2019) who found that the activities under Four Strands that involve input and output focused on meaning had positive and significant effects on vocabulary learning. Hogain (2012), in a quasi-experimental study, had found that the experimental group treated with the Four Strands approach consistently outperformed the control in receptive and productive vocabulary achievement. In the Arabic language context, this aligns with the suggestion by Samah (2013) and Al-Naqah (1985) that vocabulary teaching be implemented through activity of reading varied materials and listening to easily understood sentences from varied media such that students can collect vocabulary and master language well. Subsequently, students also need exposure to activities that can build speaking and writing skills of using meaningful sentences and phrases (Al-Naqah, 1985).

Meanwhile teaching vocabulary through fluency developing activities as suggested by Nation is also endorsed by teachers as very necessary in the module. This element involves the four language skills, except that it is implemented within a stipulated time and involves element of competition. Yang (2014) also found that college students need activities for developing L2 fluency, especially in speaking skill. Nation (2007) opined that the fluency strand is needed to ensure efficiency level in foreign language learning. The rationale for creating fluency developing activities is to give students opportunities to practise already known language and vocabulary. Nevertheless, this element requires teacher readiness to implement it in teaching and learning (Yang, 2014).

Apart from activities involving the four language skills (element of meaning focused input and output, fluency development) this study also found that teachers opined that activities aimed at enhancing vocabulary directly (language focused learning) are very necessary in creating the vocabulary development module for pre-university students. This aligns with the study by Asyiah (2017) who found that teachers admitted the need for teaching vocabulary in decontextualised way as a complement to entirely contextualised learning; for example, a word list and strategies such as using conventional dictionaries will be helpful when students search and find and retain the meaning of vocabulary items learned to help them use the terms in both speaking and writing. Scott and Nagy (2004), and Zimmerman (2009) stated that it was important for teachers and students to be aware of a wide scope of vocabulary, not limited to knowledge of meaning only. Activity of teaching aspects of vocabulary in an explicit and active way will give students opportunity to enhance vocabulary knowledge.

VIII. CONCLUSION

To conclude, teachers need a form of guide or module that directly teaches Arabic language vocabulary to pre-university students. With the module, teachers can guide students through various activities aimed at improving their vocabulary knowledge. Such activities must involve all types of language skills namely reading and listening (receptive) and speaking as well as writing (productive), in a meaningful context, besides focusing on teaching activities from the vocabulary aspect in an explicit way. Vocabulary development among pre-university students is no longer a choice but a necessity that must be planned carefully, considering that its teaching in implicit way had led to neglect of this aspect. We hope that the module development will guide teachers and students in integrating vocabulary teaching and learning in all the language skills, besides focusing on teaching aspects of vocabulary knowledge directly.

REFERENCES

[1]   Al-Batal, M. (2006). Playing with words: Teaching vocabulary in the Arabic curriculum. In K. Wahba, Z. Taha, & L. England (Eds.) *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (pp. 331-340). New York: Routledge.
[2]   AlQahtani, M. (2016). The importance of vocabulary in language learning and how to be taught. *International Journal of Teaching and Education*, *3*(3), 21–34. https://doi.org/10.20472/te.2015.3.3.002

[3] Aman, A. A., & Baharudin, H. (2019, Mei). Amalan pedagogi Jurulatih Utama Bahasa Arab dalam pengajaran kosa kata pekolah Kebangsaan di negeri Melaka. *Global Journal Al Thaqafah (GJAT)*. 15-28.

[4] Arndt, H. L., & Woore. R. (2018). Vocabulary learning from watching YouTube videos and reading blog posts. *Language Learning & Technology*, 22(1), 124–142.

[5] Asyiah, D. N. (2017). The vocabulary teaching and vocabulary learning: Perception, strategies, and influences on students' vocabulary mastery. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia, 9*(2), 293–318.

[6] Baharudin, H., & Ismail, Z. (2014). Vocabulary learning strategies and Arabic vocabulary size among Pre-University Students in Malaysia. *International Education Studies, 7*(13).

[7] Baharudin, H., & Ismail, Z. (2014). Aspek saiz dalam pembelajaran kosa kata bahasa Arab. *Wacana Pendidikan Islam Peringkat Kebangsaan Siri Ke-10* (WPI10), Fakulti Pendidikan, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia & Majlis Ugama Islam Sabah.

[8] Baharudin, H., & Lubis, M. A. (2015). Korelasi strategi dengan saiz kosa kata dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Arab. In *ASEAN Comparative Education Research Conference ACER-N 2015* (pp. 1535–1544). Bangi, Malaysia: UKM Press.

[9] Berne, J. I., & Blachowicz, C. L. Z. (2008). What reading teachers say about vocabulary instruction: Voices from the classroom. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(4), 314-323.

[10] Coxhead, A. (2010). Grabbed early by vocabulary: Nation's ongoing contributions to vocabulary and reading in a foreign language. *Reading in A Foreign Language*, 22, pp. 1-14.

[11] Daller, H., Milton, J., & Treffers-Daller, J. (2007). *Modelling and assessing vocabulary knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[12] Fan, M. (2003). Frequency of use, perceived usefulness, and actual usefulness of second language vocabulary strategies: A study of Hong Kong learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 222–241.

[13] Gu, Y. (2003). Vocabulary learning in second language: Person, task, context and strategies. *Electronic Journal, TESL-EJ, 7*(2). 1-26.

[14] Hasmam, A. Yusuf, N. M. R. N., Lubis, M. A., & Sjahrony, A. (2017). Amalan Strategi Pemahaman Makna Kosa Kata Bahasa Arab Berasaskan Konteks Penggunaan Dalam Pengajaran Guru. *ASEAN Comparative Education Research Journal on Islam and Civilization (ACER-J)*, 1(2), 53–66.

[15] Hógain, B. Ó. (2012). *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Putting The Four Strands to the test.* (Master's thesis, University of Barcelona).

[16] Isa, R. A. M., Mustapha, N. H., Rahman, T. A. R. T. A., & Pisol, N. A. (2014). Vocabulary Learning Strategies: Differences between Arabic and Non-Arabic majoring students at the International Islamic University Malaysia. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research (Language for Communication and Learning)*, 20, 28–32.

[17] Ishak, S. A. (2017). *Saiz kosa kata Bahasa Arab dan hubungannya dengan kemahiran menulis dalam kalangan pelajar prasiswazah*. (Masters thesis, National University of Malaysia).

[18] Ismail, M. Z., Bakar, K. A., Mustapha, N. F., & Rouyan, N. M. (2016). Penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata Bahasa Arab pada kalangan pelajar cemerlang. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education*, 31, 47–68.

[19] Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. New York: Longman.

[20] Laufer, B., & Nation, P.. (1999). A vocabulary size test of controlled productive ability. *Language Testing*, 16, 33- 51.

[21] Malaysian Examinations Council. (2016). *Laporan Peperiksaan Tahun 2016* [2016 Annual Examination Report]. https://www.mpm.edu.my/sumber/penerbitan/laporan-peperiksaan-stpm-dan-muet/2016

[22] Malaysian Examinations Council. (2017). *Laporan Peperiksaan Tahun 2016* [2017 Annual Examination Report] https://www.mpm.edu.my/sumber/penerbitan/laporan-peperiksaan-stpm-dan-muet/2017

[23] Malaysian Examinations Council. (2018). *Laporan Peperiksaan Tahun 2018* [2018 Annual Examination Report]. https://www.mpm.edu.my/sumber/penerbitan/laporan-peperiksaan-stpm-dan-muet/2018

[24] Maskor, Z. M. (2020). *Penilaian pengetahuan kosa kata Bahasa Arab dalam kemahiran menulis pelajar Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama*. (Doctoral thesis, National University of Malaysia).

[25] Maskor, Z. M., Baharudin, H., Lubis, M. A., & Yusuf, N. K. (2016). Teaching and Learning Arabic Vocabulary: From a Teacher's Experiences. *Creative Education*. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2016.73049

[26] Mat, A. C., & Goh Y. S. (2010). Situasi pembelajaran Bahasa Asing di Institut Pengajian Tinggi: Perbandingan antara Bahasa Arab, Bahasa Mandarin dan Bahasa Perancis. *ASEAN Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (AJTLHE)*, 2(2), 9–20.

[27] Maximo, R. (2000). Effects of rote, context, keyword, and context/ keyword method on retention of vocabulary in EFL classroom. *Language Learning, 50*(2), 385-412.

[28] McCrostie, J. (2007). Investigating the accuracy of teachers' word frequency intuitions. *RELC Journal, 38*(1), 53–66.

[29] Mezah, C. R., & Mohamad, N. (2016). *Pengajaran dan pembelajaran kosa kata Arab: Teori dan aplikasi*. Serdang: Penerbit Universiti Putra Malaysia.

[30] Milton, J. (2009). *Measuring second language vocabulary acquisition*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

[31] Nassaji, H. (2004). The relationship between depth of vocabulary klowledge and L2 Learners' lexical inferencing strategy use and success. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 61(1), 107–135.

[32] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series. Cambridge.

[33] Nation, I. S. P. (2007). The four strands. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), 1–12.

[34] Nation, I.S.P. (2013). Materials for teaching vocabulary. In B.Tomlinson (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 351-363). London: Bloomsbury.

[35] Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. London: Routledge.

[36] Nation, I. S. P., & Waring, R. (1997). Vocabulary size, text coverage and word lists. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition and pedagogy* (pp. 6-19). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[37] Noroozi, M., & Siyyari, M. (2019). Meaning-focused Output and meaning-focused Input: The case of passive and active vocabulary learning. *Cogent Arts and Humanities*, 6(1).

[38] Norris, J. & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning, 50*(3), 417–528.

[39] Oxford, R., & Scarcella R. C. (1994) Second Language Vocabulary Learning Among Adults: State Of The Art In Vocabulary Instruction. *System. Vol. 22*. No. 2. https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(94)90059-0

[40] Pa, M. T. (2007). Dasar-dasar Umum Pengajaran Bahasa Arab Di Malaysia. In Mohd Rosdi Ismail & Mat Taib Pa (Ed.), *Pengajaran dan pembelajaran Bahasa Arab di Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya.

[41] Qian, D. (2002). Investigating the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and academic reading performance: An assessment perspective. *Language Learning, 52,* 513–536.

[42] Quentin, A. (2015). Using The Four Strands to Teach Vocabulary. In D. Beglar (Ed.), *Teaching foreign language skills in the Japanese context*. Tokyo, Japan: Temple University Japan Campus.

[43] Razak, Z. R. A., & Samah, R. (2018). Saiz kosa kata Bahasa Arab dalam kalangan pelajar di peringkat Pengajian Tinggi: Permasalahan dan strategi pengajaran. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics*, *8*(2), 61–70.

[44] Razak, Z. R. A., Samah, R., Jumingan, M. F., & Bakar, M. S. A. (2016). Kebolehan Menguasai Kosa Kata Bahasa Arab dalam Buku Teks di Kalangan Pelajar Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM). *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics (IJLEAL)*, 2289–9294.

[45] Read, J. (2004). Research in teaching vocabulary. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 146–161.

[46] Read, J., & Chapelle, C. A. (2001). A Framework for Second Language Vocabulary Assessment. *Language Testing*, *18*(1), 1–32.

[47] Rejab, H. M. (2016) *Amalan pentaksiran dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran Insya' Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM)*. (Doctoral thesis, University of Malaya).

[48] Samah, R. (2009). *Pendekatan pengajaran kosa kata Bahasa Arab di peringkat Menengah Rendah: Kajian kepada guru Bahasa Arab di Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Kuala Lumpur* (SMKKL). Nilai: Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia.

[49] Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[50] Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research, 12*.

[51] Schmitt, N., & Meara, P. M. (1997). Researching vocabulary through a word knowledge framework: Word associations and verbal suffixes. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 19,* 17-35

[52] Scott, J. A., & Nagy, W. E. (2004). Developing word consciousness. In J. F. Baumann & E. J. Kame'enui (Eds.), *Vocabulary instruction: Research to practice* (pp. 201-217). New York: Guilford Press.

[53] Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehension output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235–252). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

[54] Tsubaki, M. (2018). Designing the vocabulary component for an EFL Cross-Cultural Communication Class. *SALTeL Journal (Southeast Asia Language Teaching and Learning)*, *1*(1), 48–59.

[55] Tuaymah, R. A. (1986). *Al-Marja' fî Ta'lîm al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah li al-Nâthiq în bi Lughâtin Ukhra*. Jilid 1. Makkah, Saudi Arabia: Jâmi'ah Ummu al-Qur â

[56] Vermeer, A. (2001). Breadth and depth of vocabulary in relation to L1/L2 acquisition and frequency of input. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 22,* 217-234.

[57] Wallace, C. (2007). Vocabulary: The key to teaching English language learners to read. *Reading Improvement*, *44*, no. 4. p. 189+. *Gale Academic OneFile*.

[58] Wilkins, D. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.

[59] Yang, Y. I. J. (2014). Is speaking fluency strand necessary for the college students to develop in the EFL class? *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *4*(2), 225–231.

[60] Yusoff, N. M. R. N., Baharudin, H., Yusri, G., Teh, K. S. M., & Embi, M. A. (2010). Pembelajaran konsonan mengikut pelat Bahasa Melayu. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, *10*(3), 1–15.

[61] Yusoff, N. M. R. N., Hussin, Z., & Normeza, W. (2014). Pembelajaran Kosa Kata Bahasa Arab Secara Aturan Kluster Semantik dan Aturan Kluster Bebas. *Jurnal Teknologi, 67*(1), 33–38.

[62] Zaini, A. R. (2015). *Penguasaan kosa kata Bahasa Arab dalam kalangan pelajar Melayu di peringkat Kolej Universiti*. (Doctoral thesis, University of Malaya).

[63] Zaini, A. R., & Rahman, M. Z. A (2017). Saiz kosa kata bahasa Arab dan hubungannya dengan kemahiran bertutur. *Jurnal Sultan Alauddin Sulaiman Shah, 4*(1), 220-228.

[64] Zhong, H. (2012). Multidimensional Vocabulary Knowledge: Development from Receptive to Productive Use. In D. Hirsh (Ed.), *Linguistic insights: Current perspectives in second language vocabulary research,* 155.

[65] Zimmerman, C. B. (2009). *Word knowledge: A vocabulary teacher's handbook*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Syakirah Mohd Razman has been teaching Arabic Language at Malaysian Government Schools for more than 20 years. She holds a B.A.(Hons) in Arabic Language and Arabic Literature from Al-Bayt University, Jordan and an M.Ed in Arabic Language Education from the National University of Malaysia. Currently, she is pursuing her Ph.D in Arabic Language Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Malaysia.

Zawawi Ismail: PhD, Associate Professor at Department of Language and Literacy Education and currently the Dean of Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya. He received his Bachelor Degree in Arabic Language & Literature (Major), Shariah (Minor) from Yarmouk University, Jordan, Post Graduate Diploma of Education from International Islamic University Malaysia, Master in Arabic Education and obtained his Ph.D. in the field of Education from the National University of Malaysia. His research interests include Arabic & Islamic Education Curriculum, Teacher Education, Muslim Minority Education, and Quranic Language Education.

Wail Muin (Al- Haj Sa'id) Ismail: PhD, Senior Lecturer, Department of Educational Foundation and Humanities, Faculty of Education, University of Malaysia. His interest includes Psychology of Education, Sociology of Education, and Islamic studies. Email: wailismail@um.edu.my.