

**Principles and Methods of Education
from the Perspective of Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (as)**

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Abstract

One of the important points in explaining of methods and principles of education is to meditate on the verses of holy Qur'an and precious sayings of Ahl al-Bayt (as). Since the revealing of the Qur'an from Allah, the Almighty to the sacred heart of the Prophet (pbuh) and quality notification of the revelation by the Prophet (pbuh) to the people is counted a kind of education so the verses of Qur'an are imagining a kind of dynamic education in which man is student and the Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (as) as the inner aspect and its flowing spirit are his teacher for ever. Therefore, the present research by the Qura'nic approach and narratives of Ahl al-Bayt (as) are going to make clear some of the methods and principles of education from the Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (as) point of view. Undoubtedly, researching in details needs so much more space.

Keywords: Qur'an, Ahl al-Bayt (as), Qur'an Training, Auditory (Listening) System, Graduation, Taking Easy and Tolerance.



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Problem Statement

The Qur'an has capacity to rescue the Islamic community from present standstill of education and make it advance and dynamic. Disregarding the Qura'nic culture is the root of backwardness of the World of Islam. The verse:

«من احياها فكانما احيا الناس جميعاً» (and he who saves man's life shall be considered as one who has saved the life of mankind as a whole) says that the purpose of saving man's life is not only saving their body but reviving their soul and spirit as well and one of the methods of saving is education and training which has based in the Qura'nic culture.

What attracted our attention in this subject is educational system of Qura'n which is used as a prophetic tradition and has been emphasized on it. The Prophet began to teach the Qura'n since the Qura'n is transmitted from God. Although conceiving and understanding the quality of revelation is impossible but since the divine revelation was a factor for sending down of holy Qura'n from the preserved tablet (لوح محفوظ) to the heart of Prophet so this transporting has been counted as a kind of education.

The verses of Qur'an which related with the sending down of Qura'n, indicate the conception of Qura'nic education which is very similar to the scenes of mankind education.

The verses of sending down of Qura'n present the method of teaching by the God who is the first teacher such as: سنقرئك فلا تنسى (we shall recite Qura'n to you in a way that will be engraved in your memory and you shall not forget.)

لا تحرك به لسانك لتعجل به، ان علينا جمعه و قرأناه. فاذا قرأناه فاتبع قرأه، ثم ان علينا بيانه

(Do not repeat hastily the word of revelation while it is in the process of being sent down [make sure that you have heard it completely]; verily, it is our undertaking to compile and to recite it; and after we have recited the word of revelation then you repeat it ; also it is our undertaking to explain it in detail.)

ورتلناه ترتيلاً (we reveal it gradually and with the necessary pause)

انا نحن نزلنا عليك القرآن تنزيلاً (verily , we have sent down the Qura'n to you [and what the disbelievers say about it is but idle talks]

Fundamentally, one of the reasons for reciting of these verses is to make use of them in the methodology and understanding of principles of the education.

Investigate in the prophetic traditions presents obviously that he had followed step by step revival samples of education and had made use of them in teaching the people as he sent down the Qura'n again which has been sent down to him.

Needless to say presenting the samples and methods of education from the Qura'n point of view cannot be discussed in an article and this discussion could go on at length and there are many questions and answers related to it which cannot be considered in the present context.

Graduation in education

One of the most important discussions in teaching is gradual and step by step training in which teacher let the students to understand training subjects. God, the most exalted has said in his book:

«و قرآنا فرقناه لتقرأه علي الناس علي مكث و نزلناه تنزيلا»

(And we divided this Qur'an into parts so that you may recite it to the people at intervals and with necessary pauses. and we have sent down its words of revelation by stages.)

Listening system

The Prophet learned the Qur'an from God the almighty through listening and saying, by heart, clearly and distinctly (LXXV: 16-19), word by word, and character by character (al-Halabiy, 1/260). Then He taught early Muslims similarly, faithfully, exactly, and literally, so that everybody around Him was able to repeat the words of God's speech after the Prophet, learn it by hearing-saying several times, and recite what had learned by themselves afterwards. Besides, they were able to teach other Muslims as easy and exact as they had been learning (al-BuKhari, 1981, 6/108; al-Tirmithi, 4/246, N.3072, 3074; al-Imam Ahmad, 1/57, 69, 153; al-Thahabi, 1/33; al-Majlisi, 89/189, N.13; al-Fadli, 13-21; Ma'rifat, 2/31-45).

Thus, whenever a *sura* or a group of *ayas* were revealed, the former simple educational system became activated. The newly revealed part of the Qur'an was to be recited, heard/listened and repeated over and over, until it could join the previous part of Qur'an and get combined with early *suras* and *ayas*.

In this manner, and by applying this simple system of teaching-learning, Muslims taught each other and at the time of Prophet's departure from this world, a large number of Muslims had totally taught the whole text of the Qur'an who were given the title of "*Qāri*" or "*Muqri*" i.e. a

person who is perfect and expert at teaching the Qur'an (al-Thahabi, 1/33; al-Fadli, 13-22).

Question is a resulting of exact hearing then whatever the education is based on auditory system we come nearer to the goal of education.

(ما على الرسول الا البلاغ) the messenger's duty is but to convey the message. And you should be only a good hearer and listen with care. God says:

[يا ايها الناس ضرب مثل فاستمعوا له) (o' people listen with care to the parable which suits you best]

The first step in learning is listening with care.

«قل اعوذ برب الناس» و «قل اعوذ برب الفلق» و «قل هو الله احد»

[Say O' Messenger! I seek refuge with the creator of mankind...]

[Say O' Messenger! I seek refuge in the creator of the down...]

[Say O' Messenger! Allah is the one the only creator...]

In these verses messenger is saying and you Qura'n learner should be hearer

[O' People! and when the holy Qura'n is recited, give you ear to it]

Such that the Prophet in the receiving of revelation only listen with care to what has been sent down to him: [I have chosen you so listen to what will be revealed to you] (و انا اخترتك فاستمع لما يوحى)

[we shall recite Qura'n to you in a way that will be engraved in your memory and you shall not forget.] سنقرئك فلا تنسى

لا تحرك به لسانك لتعجل به، ان علينا جمعه و قرأناه فاذا قرأناه فاتبع قرأه، ثم ان علينا بيانه

[Do not repeat hastily the word of revelation while it is in the process of being sent down (make sure that you have heard it completely) ; verily, it is our undertaking to compile and to recite it ; and after we have recited the word of revelation then you repeat it ; also it is our undertaking to explain it in detail.]

Listening role in education

Qura'n is not speaking clearly about the role of Listening in learning but explains it in a way that to present to us the importance of listening in education. One of the methods of Qura'n is precedence of Listening to the vision.



The Prophet founded His Qur'an teaching on listening and speaking, similar to natural training of mother tongue. Nowadays, we continuously observe all various languages as being taught and learnt through hear-say-see methods, just like what the Prophet who his guidance is named in the Qur'an as "*Uswat-on hassana*" did to His early learners, Arabs and non-Arabs, with no differentiating, a full fourteen centuries ago. The main difference or contrast is that all other methods have considered the Qur'an as a book to be read, and hence they tried to teach its reading. But from the Prophet's viewpoint, the Qur'an is a language which should be taught to everyone, next to mother tongue, parallel to it or afterwards, taking into consideration that Qur'anic language is not any human being's mother tongue, so that even for the Prophet Himself the special Arabic of the Qur'an is not a native language and needs to be taught by God the almighty. In this manner, and by applying this simple system of teaching-learning, Muslims taught each other and at the time of Prophet's departure from this world, a large number of Muslims had totally taught the whole text of the Qur'an who were given the title of *Qārī* or *Muqrī* i.e. a person who is perfect and expert at teaching the Qur'an (al-Thahabi, 1/33; al-Fadli, 13-22).

Allah the almighty says in His book:

قل هو الذى انشاكم و جعل لكم السمع و الابصار و الافئدة قليلا ما تشكرون

[Say O' Messenger! Allah is the one who created you and made for you the ears, the eyes and the hearts (to hear and see and comprehend the truth) but you people express your gratitude very little]

One of our reasons for the importance of hearing influence in the learning is the Qura'n states listening by the side of wisdom and intellect. God says:

و قالوا لو كنا نسمع او نعقل ما كنا فى اصحاب السعير

[And they shall say: had we listened to their admonitions and had we used our reason we would not be among the inhabitants of hell]

Some verses use listening as a meditation and understanding such as:

و انا لما سمعنا الهدى آمنا به [and verily , when we listened to Allah's

Guidance we believed in it.]

و نطبع على قلوبهم فهم لا يسمعون [and we put a seal on their hearts in order that they would not hear (the Truth)]

Role of teacher words in education

Presence of teacher in educational circumference and hearing the teaching context from the teacher is more effect than others. In some verses Reading is precedence and Qura'n expresses the reciting before education and training. God says:

هو الذى بعث فى الاميين رسولا منهم يتلوا عليهم آياته ويزكيهم و يعلمهم الكتاب و الحكمة و ان كانوا من قبل لفي ضلال مبين

[Allah is one who sent among the *Ommiyien* (الاميين) a messenger from among themselves to recite to them his words of revelation, in order to purify them from the dirt of disbelief and polytheism and to teach them the book of Truth and wisdom, though they were before that in an apparent error.]

Observing Simplicity and Clearness

Another important point in education is to regard Simplicity and Clearness in educational subjects. Doubtlessness, Qura'n is divine words but because of being understandable for the mankind, presents its educational subjects in a way of simplicity and clearness. God almighty in his book says: «هذا بيان للناس» [this (holy Qura'n) is a clear statement for mankind]

«و لقد يسرنا القرآن للذكر فهل من مدكر» [and we have revealed the holy Qura'n easy and simple to be understood and to be guiding to the people]

Education with full of welfare and goodness (كوثرى) instead of pilling up worldly things (تكاثرى)

Observing Quantity and neglect (disregard) Quality in education and training is a negative result of modern technology and sciences. Qura'n prohibit merely observing Quantity and pilling up worldly things and on the other hand express the importance of Quality witch is full of welfare and goodness. God says: (الهالك التكاثر) [the vein effort of pilling up worldly things].

So the useful method of education is observing Quality Not Quantity.

Being lenient and severity in teaching

The educational modern technology regards simplicity and severity in teaching, and balances each of them. Qura'n refer to balance in this verse:

«واقصد فى مشيك» [and be moderate in your walking]



God almighty regards simplicity and taking easy in teaching. He says in his book:

فانما يسرناه بلسانك لعلمهم يتذكرون [(O' Messenger) we have made this Qura'n easy in your tongue in order that people understand the meaning and be reminded by it]

One can not find even one example for strictness, pedantry and severity in the subject under discussion, during Prophet's guiding life. On the contrary, He behaved so flexibly that occasionally caused "something" in the heart of His loyal disciples (al-Tabari, 1/11; al-Khuei, 172-173).

The Prophet repeated His very wondrous speech each time and on each occasion emphasizing that "The Qur'an has been revealed/sent down on seven types; thus, read it as easy as you may read" (al-Bukhari, 25/235; Muslim, 1/560; al-Khuei' 171-193; al-Fani, 42-46) clearly referring to recitation of the Qur'an as being limitless, not confined to seven or seventy types; as was indeed witnessed afterwards (al-Tabari, 1/18-20; Abushama, 148-152; al-Zarkeshi, 1/469470; Ibn al-Jazari, 1/40-44). Also, whenever He heard or listened to anyone reciting a sura or an aya of the Qur'an, He already approved them in advance before the reciter or others could hesitate or doubt about their recitation of Qur'an as it would have been questionable (al-Tabari, 1/16; Ibn al-Jazari, 1/52; al-Zurqani, 1/178-183; al-Fani, 46-50).

On the other hand, opposite to unbelievers, Mussa presses hard up on them and says:

ربنا اطمس على اموالهم واشدد على قلوبهم فلا يؤمنوا حتى يروا العذاب الاليم

[Our Creator! Please perish their wealth and splendor and make their hearts so hard that they shall not believe until they encounter the Grievous Torment]

Encouragement and Punishment

Qura'n full of encouragements in which the believer, patient, beneficent and pious because of their goodness has been designed to be encouraged and living in happiness and bounty in the proximity of those who are pure and close to the divine presence. God says:

اولئك يجزون الغرفة بما صبروا و يلقون فيها تحيه و سلاما

[Such believers will be rewarded an excellent chamber in the garden for their patience and steadfastness in their faith and therein they shall receive greeting and respect]

On the other hand, we find out some verses speaking of Unbelievers who is subjected to live in affliction and pain. God the most exalted, has said in his book:

فاما الذين كفروا فاعذبهم عذابا شديدا فى الدنيا و الاخره و ما لهم من ناصرين

[As to the disbelievers, I will chastise them with a severe chastisement in this world and in the hereafter; and they shall have not protectors and helpers]

Characteristics and particulars of teacher

From the Qura'n point of view, the teachers and instructors should practice what they are saying to be patterns for the others. God says;

تامرون الناس بالبر و تنسون انفسكم و انتم تتلون الكتاب افلا تعقلون

[Do you enjoin right contact and piety on the people, and forget (to practice it) yourselves, and yet you recite the scripture? Will you not use your reason?]

يا ايهاالذين آمنوا لم تقولون ما لا تفعلون كبير مقتا عندالله ان تقولوا ما لا تفعلون

[O' You who believe! Why do you say that witch you do not do? It causes Allah's wrath gravely that you say and promise something that you do not fulfill]

Educational method based on presenting pattern

The holy Qura'n presents many patterns for the all aspects of the mankind life. Surly presenting the patterns and models in training makes the educational subjects to be understood and not to be forgotten. Qura'n relates educational methods witch based on patterns and says:

ضرب الله مثلا للذين كفروا امرات نوح و امرات لوط كانتا تحت عبيدين من عبادنا صالحين فخانتاهما فلم يغنيا عنهما من الله شيئا و قيل ادخلا النار مع الداخلين . و ضرب الله مثلا للذين امنوا امرات فرعون اذ قالت رب ابن لى عندك بيتا فى الجنة و نجنى من فرعون و عمله و نجنى من القوم الظالمين و مريم ابنت عمران التى احصنت فرجها فنفخنا فيه من روحنا و صدقت بكلمات ربها و كتبه و كانت من القانتين

[And Allah has set forth examples among those who believed (of women): The wife of firown when she prayed; O' my Creator! Please construct for me a home in the paradise in your presence and save me from Firown and his wrongdoings and save me from this people who are all Wrongdoers. And also Maryam daughter of Imran who was a chaste woman and we breathed in her a spirit from our own presence and she testified to the truth of her creator's word of revelation and his books and she was of the obedient worshippers of Allah]

نحن نقص عليك نبأهم بالحق انهم فتية آمنوا بربهم و زدناهم هدى

[We relate to you (O' messenger) their true story: they were a group of young men who believed in their creator so we increased the guidance for them]

Educational method based on rationality

The Qura'n repeatedly uses the expressions: why do they not reflect? Why do they not ponder? It constantly encourages the use of intellect and invites people to think, investigate and analyze. To conclude, we quote just a few of the verses to give the reader a taste of how the Holy Qura'n emphasizes the role of reason, rationality and solid evidence in the realm of ideas and beliefs

هل يستوى الذين يعلمون و الذين لا يعلمون

[Are those who know equal to those who do not know?]

فبشر عبادالذين يستمعون القول فيتبعون احسنه اولئك الذين هداهم الله و اولئك هم اولوالالباب

[Give the good news to my obedient worshippers! Those who listen to different speeches and preaching and follow the best among the variety, those are the one whom Allah has guided and they are indeed men of wisdom]

كذلك يحيى الله الموتى و يريكم آياته لعلكم تعقلون

[Thus, Allah brings the dead to life, (on the day of resurrection) and shows you his miracles so that you may use your reason]

افلا يتدبرون القرآن ام على قلوب اقفالها

[Do they not ponder about the words of revelation of the holy Qura'n? Or are their hearts locked up and the truth does not reach them?]

The number of verses exhorting Muslims to make the best use of reason, rationality and scientific investigation even when they are reminded by Creator's signs and they should not accept without meditation on them. God almighty says in holy Qura'n:

والذين اذا ذكروا بايات ربهم لم يخروا عليها صما و عميانا

[And the believers of *Ar Rahman* are those who when reminded of their Creator's signs they do not pretend as blind and deaf from seeing and hearing the truth]



Comprehensive and various methods

The holy Qura'n in some numbers of his verses speaks about a kind of way which is effective in education and calls people to emigrate and travel the land and observe the creation. God the most exalted says in his book:

قل سيروا فى الارض فانظروا كيف بدا الخلق ثم الله ينشئ النشاه الاخره ان الله على كل شىء

قدير

[Say (o' messenger!) Travel through the land and observe the creation of the creatures of all sorts; and think about the issue that how Allah has started creation; and thus He will create the last world; verily, Allah is powerful over all things]

And in another verse refers to the various methods of education in the lifetimes of messengers and introduces Nuh and Mohammad as a prophet who called the people publicly and privately and with the hard attempting. So this kind of calling can be used as a pattern in education and training.

God says:

ثم انى دعوتهم جهارا . ثم انى اعلنت لهم و اسررت لهم اسرارا

[Then I called them to faith publicly; then I conversed with every individual publicly or privately]

In the some number of verses, God almighty refers to effort and hard attempting of the prophet in education and training the people and says:

قال رب انى دعوت قومى ليلا و نهارا

[Nuh said: o' my Creator truly I called my people by night and day constantly

لعلك باخع نفسك الا يكونوا مومنين

[You may kill your self (o' messenger) with grief for the very reason that they do not believe].



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