



Islamic Religion Teachers' Efforts In Improving the Literacy of Al-Qur'an of Elementary School Students

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Receive: 10/01/2023

Accepted: 10/02/2023

Published: 01/03/2023

Abstract:

The ability to read and write the Qur'an for students at school is the shared responsibility of teachers who are Muslim, but Islamic religion teachers have a very large role because they are considered to have been equipped from college the ability to read, write, and understand the Qur'an properly. In addition, there are several learning materials that require students to be able to recognize hijaiyah letters, write hijaiyah letters, connect hijaiyah letters, and be able to read the Qur'an. Qur'anic literacy learning in schools is limited, therefore this study aims to find out what efforts are made by PAI teachers to improve the literacy of the Qur'an of Grade I and II Students of SD Negeri 82 Parepare City. The research was conducted using a qualitative method with a field research approach, where the research data was collected through interview techniques together with Islamic religion teachers and Principals. Data collection was also carried out through observation techniques of Al-Qur'an literacy learning activities taking place at school and identifying lesson plans and media used in Al-Qur'an literacy. The results showed that the efforts made by Islamic religion teachers in improving the Qur'an literacy skills of students in grades I and II are apperception activities utilized for a maximum of 10 minutes, every Friday for 1 hour of lessons, flash pesantren activities in the month of Ramadan for 1 week, and the introduction of letters.

Keyword: *Qur'anic Literacy, Islamic Religion Teacher, Learning Methods*

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an as a guide to life for Muslims has been introduced by parents to their children from an early age so that when children have entered formal school learning the Qur'an becomes an integral part of other subjects taught by the teacher. Introducing children to the Qur'an is essentially introducing them to how to read and write it, especially for students who are at the elementary level (Sopian, 2020). This is done so that one day they can read, write, and interpret the verses in it.

Learning the Qur'an to students at school is the main responsibility of Islamic religion teachers, but because learning time at school is limited so that to maximize it other

efforts are needed outside of class hours (Siregar et al., 2022). Moreover, there is no special hour in Islamic learning that is intended for Qur'an learning activities, therefore the teacher as a facilitator at school is expected to be able to direct and guide students to be able to carry out a useful learning activity.

The guidance to be able to read and write the Qur'an starts from the early grades, therefore the success of Islamic religion teachers in grades I and II greatly determines the ability of students in the next grade and the next level of education to be able to understand and interpret the Qur'an as a signpost in carrying out life in the world to achieve blessings in the hereafter (Shinta & Ain, 2021). The basis for being able to understand the

writings in the Qur'an is being able to recognize the letters called hijaiyah letters. When you recognize the letters, the next step is to be able to connect the letters into words and sentences. If you are able to read it, then the next level is being able to write it either by imitating techniques or by non-testing techniques (Assingkily, 2019). The ability to read, write, and interpret is known as literacy, therefore the purpose of basic formal education is to familiarize students to read and write so that at the secondary and tertiary levels their ability to understand and later in everyday life independently continues to be accustomed to reading the Qur'an, understanding its meaning, and guiding it in daily activities both in action and in making a decision because in the Qur'an there are laws or rules for interacting between fellow humans and the creator Allah SWT (Al-Qaththan, 2018).

In essence, students who have received basic education in kindergarten/RA and or are introduced early by their parents to the hijaiyah letters, it will make it easier for teachers to increase their literacy level because in principle the most basic level of literacy is performative (Ramli & Mustam, 2022), Where at this level students are only required to be able to read and write one or two syllables of hijaiyah letters without paying attention to the laws of good and correct reading or writing, while the category of Qur'anic literacy of students can be said to be at a higher level if they can master makhrajul letters, master the law of nun sukun or tanwin meeting hijaiyah letters and mastery of mad (the length or shortness of letters when read) (Surawan & Fatimah, 2021). The ability to write the Qur'an well is when a student masters the writing of hijaiyah letters and the beheading of words or sentences on the hijaiyah letters in the Qur'an.

The challenge for Islamic religion teachers in elementary schools, especially in grades I and II, is when students are not able to distinguish the mention of hijaiyah letters properly and are still in the category of imitating the writing of letters (Safitri & Dafit, 2021). This has an impact on Al-Qur'an learning efforts that must be carried out by

teachers together with school management so that students in the next grade level no longer have difficulty reading and writing the Al-Qur'an because Islamic religious textbooks always have Al-Qur'an verses or hadiths that are used as references to introduce children to the rules that bind in running life in the world (Nikmah, 2022).

The right pattern of learning the Qur'an must be carried out by the teacher, of course, by considering the learning characteristics of students and learning models that make it easier for students to understand well (Farid et al., 2022). Learning the Qur'an has the principle of habituation or repetition, therefore when students already have a good foundation, at least recognizing letters, they can be improved in their ability to know the laws of good reading and changes in hijaiyah letters when they are written together to form a word or sentence (Baharsyah & Said, 2023). Learning the Qur'an is not enough just by memorizing it, but it must be consistently repeated so that it can be fluent and become a habit in life (Azmi, 2019).

The information storage ability of students in grades I and II at the primary level is still very strong, therefore they will very easily accept what is taught by the teacher (Iriani, 2019). Moreover, at that level they still have a lot of trust in what is conveyed by the teacher so that this will make it easier for the teacher to form an initial understanding and improve Qur'anic literacy skills.

The opportunities and challenges of Islamic religion teachers in improving students' Qur'an literacy in grades I and II at the elementary level is something that can be used by teachers to find the right way to teach the Qur'an to students. This is the purpose of the research, which will find efforts made by Islamic religion teachers to improve students' Qur'an literacy skills in grades I and II at SD Negeri 82 Parepare City. The interest in conducting research at this location is due to the condition of student literacy in the class already knows the hijaiyah letters well but cannot read the Qur'an and is still learning to imitate the writing of the Qur'an while they

have a student program when they are in grade III must be able to read and write the Qur'an properly.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used to obtain information related to the efforts of Islamic religion teachers in improving the Qur'an literacy of elementary school students is a qualitative research method with the type of field research (Creswell, 2002). Research activities carried out at SD Negeri 82 Parepare City include observation activities by directly observing the Al-Qur'an learning activities carried out by Islamic religion teachers and this activity is carried out within a period of 2 months. Observations in the study also focused on learning the Qur'an carried out by Islamic religion teachers in classes I and II. In addition to the observation method, research data collection was also carried out through direct interviews with Islamic religion teachers who taught in grades I and II and the Principal who provided support for the implementation of Qur'anic literacy both in intracurricular and extracurricular activities. Affirmation of research data is also carried out by directly analyzing the lesson plans used by Islamic religion teachers in Islamic religion learning. This was done to directly correct the Islamic religion teacher's statement about the efforts made to improve the Qur'anic literacy skills of students in grades I and II. The research data collection technique through document search was also carried out by collecting Al-Qur'an learning materials and media used in Al-Qur'an learning.

After all research data is collected through observation, interview, and documentation techniques (Herdiansyah, 2013), the next step in the research is to analyze the data using the reduction, triangulation, and conclusion drawing methods

which aim to find answers to problems that arise in research (Darmalaksana, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following is a description related to the results and discussion of the research that has been carried out

Result

Teachers as facilitators in learning have a function to direct students to be able to be directly involved in learning because 21st century learning competencies require students to be able to think critically and communicatively (Ismail, 2018). Students who are directly involved in learning will make it easier for them to remember what they have done compared to those students who are only required by the teacher to memorize. The weakness of the memorization method is that when it is not repeated frequently, the memorization will easily be lost so that the strategy to keep memorization in mind is to repeat it every day with a pattern of habituation.

Habits formed since the primary grades, in this case grades I and II, when routinely carried out, will have a good impact on children's behavior at the next level. This happens because there is a goal of school management to continue the Qur'an literacy habituation program starting from grade I until students graduate from SD Negeri 82 Parepare City.

Improving students' Qur'an literacy skills in grades I and II is not only carried out unilaterally by Islamic religion teachers, but seeing the condition of students who can be said to have not reached 50% who can write and read the Qur'an becomes an initial information that is discussed together with the school. This condition requires the Principal together with the teacher and the committee to make several strategies for implementing activities and among them is an agreement that

the Islamic religion teacher before starting Islamic religion learning is advised to familiarize students with the mention of hijaiyah letters properly for one semester and in the next semester it is improved to the ability to write hijaiyah letters and this is implemented in grade 1. The Qur'an literacy strategy in class II is also the same, the initial time is used a maximum of 10 minutes before learning activities begin to familiarize students with reading and writing the Qur'an at iqro level II and III.

The strategy is attempted to be implemented in classes I and II so that when there are students who are already at the level of ability set by the teacher and are in the advanced category, then the student concerned will be directed by the teacher to help the teacher teach his friends who are still struggling. Islamic religion teachers also apply a method by first announcing the correct way of mentioning or writing the hijaiyah letters then several times the students reduce until the teacher gets a way of mentioning or writing that is 50% the same as what is imitated. Imitating the correct pronunciation and good writing is also sometimes entrusted to students who are proficient to lead their friends in mentioning so that indirectly through Al-Qur'an learning also trains students' confidence to perform and motivates other students to the next opportunity to perform also by trying to improve the way they mention letters and write them in good writing. The same method is also used by teachers in class II, where in this class students are motivated to be able to read and write the Qur'an.

Another effort made by the Islamic religion teacher together with the school is to familiarize students on every Friday to read and write the Qur'an during the first lesson hour. This activity is usually carried out outdoors and involves all homeroom teachers

as assistants during the activity. Especially for grades I and II, it is strived that during one academic school year students can complete the reading of iqro at least up to iqro I for class I and iqro 4 for class II as well as the target of writing the Qur'an at least for class I can write hijaiyah letters in sequence without looking at the *tekas* and maximum can provide punctuation marks *fathah*, *kasrah*, *dhammah*, *sukun*, *tasydid*, and *tanwin*. The level of ability to write the Qur'an in class II can at least know the changes in hijaiyah letters when they are connected to other letters and maximally they can write some words in the Qur'an with good writing and clear to read even though they are still imitating the writing in the Qur'an.

Another activity used as an effort to achieve the target of increasing the Qur'an literacy skills of students in grades I and II is the Islamic religion teacher in collaboration with students in grades V and VI to make beautiful writing of hijaiyah letters using beautiful colors and interesting shapes and not violating the original form as well as several verses in the short chapters of *juz 30* which are written using hijaiyah letters and equipped with Indonesian language mentioning the verse which is posted on the school making every week with the hope that students in grades I and II when visiting the making can read the Qur'an and make it easier for them to learn because it is accompanied by Latin.

In every academic year that coincides with the month of Ramadan, the activity of increasing Qur'anic literacy is also one of the main programs. Activities carried out for one week in the second week of Ramadan are used to improve students' reading and writing of the Qur'an and especially for classes I and II, the activities are focused on achieving the target of Qur'anic literacy accompanied by Islamic learning patterns of learning while singing to make it easier to recognize letters and the laws

of reading. In addition, learning activities are also carried out using game methods so that students feel happy to learn the Qur'an and make it easier for them to remember it.

Discussion

Efforts to increase Qur'anic literacy carried out by Islamic religion teachers focus on the targets that have been set by using varied learning methods so that students do not feel bored because learning strategies are essentially not only focused on the process or phase of learning activities, but also contain different arrangements of material and program packages to be delivered (Uno & Mohamad, 2011).

The role of teachers in learning will determine the success of students in understanding the material, therefore teachers not only transfer knowledge but teachers must also educate, direct, guide, and be professional in carrying out their duties (Christoper, 2018). Determining learning strategies is not only done unilaterally, but how Islamic religion teachers observe in advance or seek information by conducting initial tests related to students' ability to read and write the Qur'an so that the results of these initial tests are used by Islamic religion teachers to determine learning models in improving students' Qur'an literacy.

The initial test conducted by the teacher provides a lot of information that the ability to write and read students in class I varies and of course this diversity is caused by several factors, including students who already have good Al-Qur'an reading and writing skills, it turns out that they have received guidance and teaching from parents, teachers in kindergarten, and parents' initiatives to provide additional Al-Qur'an lessons to their children with the help of Koran teachers or private tutors. Students whose ability to read and write the Qur'an is still low is because they do not

get special attention from parents to learn to write and read the Qur'an. Facing this condition, the Islamic religion teacher then took the initiative to teach first grade students to always recite prayers before learning and prayers after learning by being led by their friends in turn who had memorized the prayer.

The technique of observing students' abilities in class II is carried out by Islamic religion teachers by giving initial tests to students at the beginning of the school year. The test given aims to determine students' ability to read and write the Qur'an. Islamic religion teachers again carry out the test because almost all students have received additional Qur'anic learning from the family environment entrusted by parents to the Koran teacher around their home environment. The test results are then used as a reference for the teacher to determine the right learning pattern for students so that the Al-Qur'an knowledge that has been obtained from the Koran teacher can be in line with the Al-Qur'an learning that will be given.

The implementation of formative tests used by Islamic religion teachers before Qur'an learning begins is an appropriate step to determine the learning model that can be applied to students because the characteristics of students vary in one class. Choosing an inappropriate learning model will have an impact on the overall non-achievement of learning objectives (Hidayat & Asyafah, 2019). In addition to determining the learning model in the classroom, the results of the formative test are also a reference for Islamic religion teachers and school officials to pursue extracurricular learning strategies that can be provided to students, especially for those who have below-average ability to read and write the Qur'an.

The Islamic religion teacher's efforts so that students' Qur'an literacy after completing grade II are maximized because this

knowledge is not only a guide for Muslims to be able to read the Qur'an but also influenced by factors so that students are able to understand the content of the Qur'anic verses contained in the learning material. Islamic religious learning handbooks certainly contain various verses and hadiths so that when students are unable to read these writings, they will experience lagging learning material and have an impact on not achieving learning objectives (Nursaadah, 2022).

Students' Qur'anic literacy can be declared improved when they are able to read and write the Qur'an in accordance with the boundaries that have been determined and agreed upon by the school. The indicators of reading the Qur'an can be categorized as good, when students already know and apply tajweed, makharijul huruf, and tartil when reading the Qur'an (Hasan & Wahyuni, 2018). All of these guidelines will be very good when they can be applied to students and they can apply them, but because what is faced is first and second grade students and the limited ability of Islamic religion teachers so that the purpose of learning the Qur'an is only intended for students to be able to read the Qur'an following the basic limitations first. When they are able to read, then the next grade level will focus on improving tajweed and makharijul letters.

The ability to write the Qur'an is declared to be in an excellent category when it meets the boundaries of the indicators of writing it in Arabic letters with precise, complete, perfect, solid, and fluent provisions. In addition to the provisions written in Arabic letters, good Al-Qur'an writing is expressed by the ability to string verses characterized by the ability to connect the hijaiyah letters into a word to give birth to a sentence in the form of a verse. The last ability that must be possessed in writing the Qur'an is the accuracy of placing

the harakat on the hijaiyah letters so that the verse can be read properly and has a good meaning (Umami et al., 2020). The proficiency in writing the Qur'an is declared very good when someone is able to write it independently without imitating, but the target of the ability to write the Qur'an up to grade II agreed upon by the Islamic religion teacher together with the school is that students are able to know the changes in hijaiyah letters when they will be written in conjunction with other hijaiyah letters and they also understand that there are some hijaiyah letters that cannot be connected with other hijaiyah letters.

Determination of targets known as learning objectives is an absolute thing in learning because it is a reference for determining the learning model to be applied. The targets that have been set must certainly be measurable and realistic in accordance with students' thinking abilities or in other words their learning styles (Suardipa & Primayana, 2020). The measurement technique given to students to find out the level of target achievement must of course also be adjusted to the learning materials that have been given because in principle the evaluation process is intended to measure things that are supporters or obstacles so that learning objectives are not achieved. This is the basic reference for Islamic religion teachers together with the school in knowing the students' Al-Qur'an literacy skills. If the ability to literate the Qur'an increases, it is categorized as a success, but when literacy skills do not increase, the causes will be explored in depth. The unsuccessfulness becomes a reference to improve the learning process both in terms of material, media, or teachers.

The programs that have been carried out at school to improve the Qur'anic literacy skills of grade I and grade II students are well received by students and they follow each of these activities in accordance with the time

requirements set by the School Keeper. In addition, homeroom teachers also provide assistance to the implementation of the program so that it can be stated that improving Qur'anic literacy is a shared responsibility and not only the main responsibility of Islamic religion teachers. This is a shared obligation because teaching religion to the next generation must be done well so that they can live their lives according to guidance and always be guided by the Qur'an and hadith.

CONCLUSION

Islamic religion teachers have responsibility for students' ability to read and write the Qur'an because it is something that will make it easier to live life in the world and the hereafter based on the rules that have been described in it. The responsibility to improve reading and writing the Qur'an is also supported by the principal's policy and all parties in the school so that the proposed programs can be implemented properly and have a good impact on student abilities. The learning process that is carried out is of course based on the results of observations of the characteristics and initial abilities of students so that the planning, implementation, organization, and evaluation processes can be carried out properly in accordance with the results of a collective agreement. The programs carried out by Islamic religion teachers to support the improvement of literacy include habituation to write and read the Qur'an a maximum of 10 minutes before the learning process begins, habituation to read and write the Qur'an during the first lesson hour every Friday which is carried out outdoors, utilizing flash pesantren activities carried out in the second week of Ramadan every academic year to improve the ability to write and read the Qur'an, and the last program is to collaborate with fifth and sixth grade students to introduce hijaiyah letters and include one verse accompanied by Indonesian writing.

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