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## Efforts to Improve the Ability to Read and Write the Qur'an of Elementary Madrasah Students

Somantri<sup>1</sup>, Qurotul Aini<sup>2</sup>, Ayu Puranti<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Islam Bunga Bangsa Cirebon, Indonesia

Corresponding author: somantrip6@gmail.com

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### Abstract

**Objective:** This research aims to analyze the efforts made to improve students' ability to read and write the Al-Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam. **Novelty:** The study highlights the specific strategies implemented by MI Darul Hikam, emphasizing the integration of iqra' and tahfiz methods, which have not been extensively documented in similar contexts. **Methods:** The research method was carried out using a descriptive approach. Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. **Results:** The research results show that MI Darul Hikam implemented various strategies to improve these abilities, including the use of iqra' and tahfiz methods. This can be seen from the existence of a well-implemented Al-Qur'an (BTQ) reading and writing program and the use of appropriate methods, intensive guidance programs, as well as support from the school and parents. **Conclusion:** As a result of these efforts, students' ability to read and write the Al-Qur'an experienced a significant increase.

**Keywords:** Ability, Read and Write the Qur'an, Increased Learning.

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## INTRODUCTION

For Muslims, studying the Al-Qur'an is an obligation that must be carried out, as is learning to read the Al-Qur'an with makhraj and tajwid in accordance with the guidance of the Islamic religion. A student's character is greatly influenced by their learning experiences about the religion they believe in, therefore it is very important for teachers at the MI/SD level to know how far students have progressed in studying the Koran.

If we talk about education, it cannot be separated from the role of religious education as a basis for providing more conceptual direction through the Al-Qur'an and Hadith, therefore at the educational level Al-Qur'an and Hadith education has been embedded by providing reading and writing Al-Qur'an subjects. So that students remain someone who excels but still adheres to religious principles.

The Al-Quran is the holy book of Muslims, as the main book of guidance for life, in fact it is a sea of wisdom and lessons whose edges and bottoms cannot be measured. The Al-Quran is a source of inspiration and basis for the writing of so many books and books. It is not recorded in history, a book and a book that can match the Quran in this regard. Millions of books and books that have been written based on it are not able to describe the contents and content of the Quran in its entirety. This is because its contents and content are so broad and deep to be explored. Therefore, every effort to learn and gain wisdom from a small part of the contents and content of the Quran will be very meaningful for the development of knowledge and increasing our awareness as creatures of Allah SWT. No exception is the science of art, be it fine art, vocal art. And also other arts (Akromusyuhada, 2018). When entering the world of education, reading and writing are the initial factors and initial steps for a child. If a child cannot write, indirectly the student cannot read, and vice versa. According to Muhsyanur, (2019) explains that reading is the process of searching for information using the mind which will later be processed into knowledge so that it can be useful in life now and in the future. The information obtained can come from anywhere, for example, from books, the internet, people around and others. Meanwhile, the definition of writing according to (Henry, 2018) is a way for someone to communicate indirectly using written language, or not face to face with one another. Communicating is not only always face to face but can be done with various existing media (Safitri & Dafit, 2021).

Therefore, learning the Qur'an, both reading and writing, which is carried out from an early age, is very important in order to improve the ability to read and write the Qur'an. Teaching the Qur'an to children is one of the stimulations for developing children's potential, namely the development of reading and writing skills. One of the reading skills is reading the Qur'an. Improving the ability to read the Qur'an is an urgent demand for students today. The main problem often faced by students is the weak ability to read the Qur'an. This is indicated by indications such as: (a) the weakness of students in recognizing the hijaiyah letters, (b) children's difficulty in distinguishing certain hijaiyah letters such as tsa-sa, dha-dza, (3) children have difficulty in distinguishing the length of the harokat/punctuation marks (Siregar et al., 2022). Reading and writing the Qur'an are basic skills that are important for every Muslim individual, especially for students at the elementary education level. At MI Darul Hikam, Cirebon City, teaching the Qur'an is one of the main focuses in order to form a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also has noble morals based on Islamic teachings. The ability to read and write the Qur'an properly and correctly is an integral part of forming a better

character for students, as well as a foundation in understanding and practicing the contents of God's revelation. Learning to read and write the Qur'an is actually necessary, even to this day, giving special attention. One of the negative impacts of the progress of the times and with the rapidly developing technology lately, it is undeniable that many people are confused by this and think that everything can be done instantly, simply and quickly without being hampered by time and place. The skill of reading the Qur'an or better known as the Quran, which is an important skill in the early stages of understanding the contents of the Qur'an. Learning is also closely related to Muslim rituals such as performing prayers, hajj and other religious activities. (Siregar et al., 2022)

However, in practice, there are still a number of challenges faced by MI Darul Hikam students in improving their ability to read and write the Qur'an. Some of them include difficulties in understanding the correct tajwid, accuracy in pronouncing the hijaiyah letters, and limited time given in the process of learning the Qur'an. Therefore, effective and innovative efforts are needed to improve students' ability to read and write the Qur'an, so that they can master these skills well.

This study aims to explore various efforts that can be applied to improve the ability to read and write the Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam, Cirebon City. By understanding the existing challenges, it is hoped that the right solution can be found to improve the quality of teaching the Qur'an, as well as have a positive impact on the development of students' character and spirituality.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research type. Qualitative research is a research that is descriptive and analytical in nature. Descriptive in qualitative research means describing and explaining events, phenomena and social situations being studied. Analysis means interpreting and comparing research data. (Charismana et al., 2022). Thus, this study will obtain accurate data to determine efforts to improve the ability to read and write the Qur'an of students at MI Darul Hikam, Cirebon City.

The data source in this study is the actions of the people observed or interviewed who are the main sources of written notes and taking photos. The data sources presented in this study are information from the principal, school curriculum representatives and teachers who teach at MI Darul Hikam and document data such as a description of the school location and other supporting documents. The data collection techniques in this qualitative research are carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation.

An interview is a communication or interaction process to collect information by means of questions and answers between researchers and informants or research subjects. With the advancement of information technology as it is today, interviews can be conducted without face-to-face, namely through telecommunications media. In essence, interviews are activities to obtain in-depth information about an issue or theme raised in research. Or, it is a process of proving information or statements that have been obtained through other techniques previously (Ummah, 2019). This study explores data on the background of the existence of the iqra' method of learning arranged in the form of a book consisting of 6 volumes. This method was compiled by KH. As'ad Humam, a Qur'an teacher from Yogyakarta. In implementing this

method, it also has a very positive impact on children, in addition to the ability to read the Qur'an, children are also equipped with a method of memorizing the Qur'an every day which in this case is called muroja'ah. This study uses participatory observation techniques, a technique that involves researchers with the daily activities of the person being observed as a source of research data. So that researchers go directly to the field by participating in learning activities to read and write the Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam. Starting from the preparation of learning, the learning process to the evaluation of teaching the Iqro method for students. Among the subjects of this study are the principal of MI Darul Hikam (Ustadzah Lili Lathifah S.Ag), Deputy Curriculum (Mrs. Unus Amrullah S.Pd), and the class 3 and 4 teacher council (Mrs. Aah F S.Pd, Mrs. Sri Mulyati S.E, Mrs. Rofatul Fuadz S.Pd.I and Mrs. Inayatul Chasanah S.Pd.I). Another method used is the documentation method, in the form of archival documentation in the school, such as data on the school's organizational structure, school profile, and the number of teachers and students and the school's facilities and infrastructure..

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of field research, efforts to improve the ability to read and write the Qur'an in students at MI Darul Hikam have increased by using the Iqra method. The increase in students' ability to read the Qur'an can be seen from the results of their reading of the Qur'an. Students are able to pronounce the hijaiyyah letters fluently. Their reading is able to adjust to the reading rules in the Qur'an according to the rules of Tajwid when reading the Qur'an fluently according to its length and they also know when the reading of the Qur'an will be read with a hum and when the reading of the Qur'an will be read clearly.

This activity of reading and writing the Qur'an is a habit for MI Darul Hikam students every day before learning activities begin from grades 1-6, the objectives of which include:

1. Improving the Skills of Reading and Writing the Qur'an: So that students can read the Qur'an well and correctly, and understand its meaning correctly.
2. Strengthening Religious Understanding: This habit helps students to deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings through reading the Qur'an, which is the main source of teachings.
3. Forming Positive Character: The habit of reading and writing the Qur'an can shape students' character, such as discipline, perseverance, and respect for religious teachings.
4. Cultivating Love for the Qur'an: By getting students used to reading and writing the Qur'an, it is hoped that they will love the holy book more.

The Iqro' method is a method of reading the Qur'an that emphasizes reading practice. The Iqro' guide consists of 6 volumes starting from the simplest level, step by step to the perfect level. The Iqro' method was compiled by Humam who lives in Yogyakarta. The Iqro' book from the six volumes is added with one more volume containing prayers. Some Iqro' method books are printed in each volume and some are printed in six volumes at once. Where in each volume there are learning instructions with the aim of making it easier for everyone who learns or teaches the Al-Qur'an (Kustianingrum, 2020).

According to Humam, (2000) There are 10 types of characteristics of the Iqro' book, namely: (a) Direct reading; (b) CBSA (Active Student Learning Method); (c) Private; (d)

Module; (e) Assistance; (f) Practical; (g) Systematic; (h) Varied; (i) Communicative; (j) Flexible. This method is one of the methods that is quite well-known among the community because the process of its dissemination through many channels, such as through the DEPA route or through branches that are the centers of Iqro' (Kustianingrum, 2020). The Iqra' method is a method of reading the Koran that emphasizes directly on reading practice. The Iqra' guidebook consists of 6 volumes starting from simple hijaiyah letters to the stage of connected hijaiyah letters. This method is more effective in guiding children to be able to read the Quran well and in a short period of time (Sauri et al., 2021).

The implementation of the Iqro' method at MI Darul Hikam begins with tasmi' activities, namely the habit of reading the Quran (Juz 30) together. Furthermore, students memorize the letters that have been read in the tasmi' activity and submit the memorization during tahfidz lessons in class. The letters that are read and memorized are adjusted to the achievement targets of each class that have been set in the school program for one year, which are also listed in the parent handbook. The Iqro' method is implemented by students learning to read the Qur'an using the Iqro' book starting from volume 1 to volume 6. The process of reading the Qur'an using the Iqro' method is carried out in grades 1, 2, and 3 with the following material division: grade 1 completes Iqro' 1 and 2, grade 2 completes Iqro' 3 and 4, and grade 3 completes Iqro' 5 and 6. This material division is adjusted to the minimum standards set by the school program. For the pronunciation of letters in volumes 1, 2, 3, and 4, the technique of reading in fragments is applied to avoid mistakes in reading the length of the reading. In the Iqro' method, it is not allowed to repeat the reading if the student is correct, except for students who are not yet fluent. Repetition is only done on parts that are not correct, without the need to repeat the entire material. In the Iqro book, this method is really important. In teaching the Iqro book, a ustadz or teacher is only allowed to explain and give examples of the readings listed in the "topic". While the readings on the "worksheet" used as children's practice, the ustadz is not allowed to read or guide them, the child is required to actively read it and the ustad or teacher is only tasked with listening to it while providing motivation, corrections and comments as needed (Ali Mahfud & Sobar Al Ghazal, 2022).

Because the Iqro' teaching system is applied individually, the learning process that takes place through the following methods:

1. Imitation method
2. Musyafahah method, namely directly seeing the teacher's lip movements and seeing the students' lip movements) in pronouncing.
3. Method with clear and communicative speech
4. Questioning method by pointing to certain parts of the letters and asking the students. (Nurhayah & Muhajir, 2020)

Hamdani (2017), stated that the ability to read the Qur'an is the ability of the results of learning the Qur'an obtained by students by showing it after they have completed the learning process. The ability to read the Qur'an is influenced by many factors, one of which is the method used by the teacher in learning. Teachers must be able to choose a method that is appropriate to the material to be taught. In each meeting, teachers can use several methods. The harmony of the use of the method is very dependent on the teacher's knowledge of the method tested by the teacher's own experience. In its implementation, sometimes the method used does not match the desired results. If this reality is experienced by the teacher, then the teacher must



be patient and try to solve the difficulties, namely by trying to enrich himself with knowledge of methods so that in teaching the teacher can improve his teaching again through various methods that he has mastered and replace methods that are less appropriate with other methods that he considers more appropriate. The training in reading and writing the Qur'an at the MI Darul Hikam school aims to provide encouragement, guidance, understanding, and appreciation for the Qur'an so that it can be applied in everyday life as a form of faith and piety to Allah SWT. Learning to read and write the Quran in schools aims to provide basic skills to students, such as the ability to read and write, get to know each other, and love and understand the contents of the Quran. The verses of the Quran are expected to inspire, guide, and shape students' morals and behavior so that they are in line with the messages contained in the Quran. In addition, another goal is to improve students' ability to read the Quran fluently and understand the meaning of each verse read. The use of the right method by a teacher in teaching reading the Quran will also have a very big influence on the effectiveness of learning and its implications for students' ability to read the Quran. Without a method, a learning message will not process effectively in the direction it wants to achieve. In the last decade, many methods of teaching reading and writing the Quran have been developed, as well as many guidebooks have been compiled and printed. Whatever method is developed, each has its advantages and disadvantages. The effectiveness, efficiency, speed and ease of a teaching method vary in each region. There are many types of techniques, methods, and methodologies in learning the Quran, from classical to modern methods. Currently, practical and fast methods of learning the Qur'an are developing with various advantages that are displayed. The methods that are often used in TPA are: Qiraati Method, Tilawati Method, Iqra Method, Aba Ta Tsa Method, Umami Method, Al-Tibyan Method, and so on. (Kustianingrum, 2020)

The ability to write the Qur'an well is when a student masters the writing of hijaiyah letters and the hyphenation of words or sentences. The ability to write the Qur'an of students at MI Darul Hikam shows significant development after the implementation of structured and intensive learning methods. In the activity of writing the Qur'an, students write in their respective books the verses of the Qur'an written by their teacher on the board, then they rewrite them in their books as much as 1 sheet. Based on the results of the study, most students were able to write the verses of the Qur'an well, although there were some challenges in terms of accuracy and accuracy of writing, especially in tajwid and letters that have similar shapes. Learning to write the Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam is done through repeated practice using a method that prioritizes accuracy in writing hijaiyah letters, as well as the introduction of basic tajwid rules. The results of research on learning to read and write the Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam show that the method applied is effective in improving students' ability to read and write the Qur'an. The learning process that involves systematic teaching, starting from letter recognition to reading comprehension, has succeeded in forming students' basic skills in reading fluently and understanding the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. In addition, memorization and tahfidz activities that are carried out routinely also contribute to improving the ability to memorize and appreciate the contents of the Qur'an. The students showed significant progress in their ability to read, write, and memorize the Qur'an, which has a positive impact on the formation of their character and religious values.

## CONCLUSION

The Iqro' method is an effective approach in learning to read the Qur'an that prioritizes gradual reading practice. The Iqro' guidebook consists of six volumes, starting with the introduction of simple hijaiyah letters to more complex levels, allowing students to learn to read the Qur'an in a systematic and easy-to-understand manner. At MI Darul Hikam, the implementation of the Iqro' method begins with tasmi' activities, followed by memorizing the letters that have been read, and is adjusted to the achievement targets of each class according to the school program. The use of fragmented reading techniques in the early stages aims to avoid errors in pronunciation, and repetition of reading is only done on parts that are not correct. By implementing this method, students can master the ability to read the Qur'an well in a relatively short time, as well as develop understanding and appreciation of the reading. The ability to write the Qur'an of students at MI Darul Hikam showed significant development after the implementation of structured and intensive learning methods. In the activity of writing the Qur'an, students write in their respective books the verses of the Qur'an written by their teacher on the board, then they rewrite them in their books as much as 1 sheet. Based on the results of the study, most students were able to write the verses of the Qur'an well, although there were some challenges in terms of accuracy and precision of writing, especially in tajweed and letters that have similar shapes. Learning to write the Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam is carried out through repeated practice using a method that prioritizes accuracy in writing hijaiyah letters, as well as the introduction of basic tajweed rules. Research on Efforts to Improve Students' Ability to Read and Write the Qur'an at MI Darul Hikam, Cirebon City in learning to read and write the Qur'an shows that the method used is effective in improving students' abilities. A structured learning approach, starting from letter recognition to understanding the contents of the reading, has succeeded in developing students' basic skills to read fluently and understand the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. In addition, the routine of memorization and tahfidz also plays an important role in improving the ability to memorize and appreciate the contents of the Qur'an. As a result, students show significant development in reading, writing, and memorizing the Qur'an, which also contributes to the formation of character and strengthening their religious values.

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